

SOMANATHA

The Shrine Eternal

K. M. MUNSHI

Third Edition : 1965

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan
Chowpatty, Bombay

BHAVAN'S BOOK UNIVERSITY

S O M A N A T H A
THE SHRINE ETERNAL

By

K. M. MUNSHI



1965

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GENERAL EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN—that Institute of Indian Culture in Bombay--needed a Book University, a series of books which, if read, would serve the purpose of providing higher education. Particular emphasis, however, was to be put on such literature as revealed the deeper impulses of India. As a first step, it was decided to bring out in English 100 books, 50 of which were to be taken in hand almost at once. Each book was to contain from 200 to 250 pages and was to be priced at Rs. 2.50.

It is our intention to publish the books we select, not only in English, but also in the following Indian languages: Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam.

This scheme, involving the publication of 900 volumes, requires ample funds and an all-India organisation. The Bhavan is exerting its utmost to supply them.

The objectives for which the Bhavan stands are the reintegration of the Indian culture in the light of modern knowledge and to suit our present-day needs and the resuscitation of its fundamental values in their pristine vigour.

Let me make our goal more explicit:

We seek the dignity of man, which necessarily implies the creation of social conditions which would allow him freedom to evolve along the lines of his own temperament and capacities: we seek the harmony of individual efforts and social relations, not in any makeshift way, but within the frame-work of the Moral Order; we seek the creative art of life, by the alchemy of which human limitations are progressively transmuted, so that man may become the instrument of God, and is able to see Him in all and all in Him.

The world, we feel, is too much with us. Nothing would uplift or inspire us so much as the beauty and aspiration which such books can teach.

In this series, therefore, the literature of India, ancient and modern, will be published in a form easily accessible to all. Books in other literatures of the world, if they illustrate the principles we stand for, will also be included.

This common pool of literature, it is hoped, will enable the reader, eastern or western, to understand and appreciate currents of world thought, as also the movements of the mind in India, which, though they flow through different linguistic channels, have a common urge and aspiration.

Fittingly, the Book University's first venture is the *Mahabharata*, summarised by one of the greatest living Indians, C. Rajagopalachari; the second work is on a section of it, the *Gita*, by H. V. Divatia, an eminent jurist and a student of philosophy. Centuries ago, it was proclaimed of the *Mahabharata*: "What is not in it, is nowhere." After twenty-five centuries, we can use the same words about it. He who knows it not, knows not the heights and depths of the soul; he misses the trials and tragedy and the beauty and grandeur of life.

The *Mahabharata* is not a mere epic; it is a romance, telling the tale of heroic men and women and of some who were divine; it is a whole literature in itself, containing a code of life, a philosophy of social and ethical relations, and speculative thought on human problems that is hard to rival; but, above all, it has for its core the *Gita*, which is, as the world is beginning to find out, the noblest of scriptures and the grandest of sagas in which the climax is reached in the wondrous Apocalypse in the Eleventh Canto.

Through such books alone the harmonies underlying

GENERAL EDITOR'S PREFACE

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true culture, I am convinced, will one day reconcile the disorders of modern life.

I thank all those who have helped to make this new branch of the Bhavan's activity successful.

1. QUEEN VICTORIA ROAD.

NEW DELHI:

3rd October 1951

K. M. MUNSHI

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

ON the occasion of the installation of Somanatha, I decided to collect whatever I knew or had done in connection with Somanatha. I am no scholar. The book has been written in great hurry under the stress of pressing preoccupations of a varied nature. I hope, therefore, the reader will overlook all shortcomings. Some day a scholar will examine the subject and rewrite the story in a more systematic manner.

To me, however, the satisfaction is of something done at the proper time. The ruins of Kumarapala's Temple—what I have called the Fifth Temple—are no more. The underground secrets of the temple are sealed up by the plinth of the present temple, but before its construction I had excavations conducted by Shri B. K. Thapar of the Archaeological Department of the Government of India who undertook the work with rare conscientiousness and unbounded enthusiasm. The results obtained have been out of all proportion to the amount of work put in. His report on the excavations forms indeed a valuable chapter of the book—Part III. I am indebted to him for the help he gave me. Grateful acknowledgment is also due to Shri S. K. Joglekar, the Town Planner of the Government of India, for assistance in the line drawings.

There are many myths connected with this temple. But in the course of my study, its history, as disclosed by the excavations, was before me and I have tried to present my conclusions in Part II—"Romance in Stone." I hope it will prove useful to the students of history.

NEW DELHI:
25th April 1951

K. M. MUNSHI

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

THE first edition of this work, being profusely illustrated, was found to be beyond the reach of the ordinary reader. The illustrations and line drawings of that edition are of great value to the student of History, Archæology and Architecture, but by reason of the high price, the book had become inaccessible to many. It was, therefore, decided to publish this popular edition and to include it in the Book University, more for the value of the subject-matter, rather than the worth of the book.

NAINI TAL:
21st June 1952

K. M. MUNSHI

PUBLISHERS' NOTE: THIRD EDITION

“Somanatha—the Shrine Eternal” has been out of print for a considerable time and we have pleasure in publishing the third edition of the book, suitably revised and enlarged.

The first edition of the book was written by the author in great hurry so as to synchronise its publication with the installation ceremony of Somanatha in May 1951. Within a year thereafter a second edition had to be published.

Some important material connected with the restoration of this Shrine Eternal could not be included in the previous editions. We have therefore thought it advisable in order to complete the records, to include in the present edition as an Appendix the Chapter entitled ‘Somanatha Rises Again’, from “Munshi: His Art & Work”, Vol. IV, which was published by Shri K. M. Munshi 70th Birthday Citizens’ Celebrations Committee.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AAR <i>Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan</i> by Col. Todd.
ACC <i>Aufrecht's Catalogus Catalogorum</i> .
AI	..	.. <i>Alberuni's India</i> , edited by Sachau.
ARB	..	.. <i>Archæological Remains of Bombay Presidency</i> .
ASI	..	.. <i>Archæological Survey of India</i> .
BG	..	.. <i>Bombay Gazetteer</i> .
BPSI	..	.. <i>Bhavnagar Prakrit and Sanskrit Inscriptions</i> .
BRW	..	.. <i>Buddhist Records of the Western World</i> by Beal.
CHI	..	.. <i>Cambridge History of India</i> .
DV	..	.. <i>Dvyashraya of Hemachandra Suri</i> .
DHNI	..	.. <i>Dynastic History of Northern India</i> .
EC	..	.. <i>Epigraphia Carnatica</i> .
EI	..	.. <i>Epigraphia Indica</i> .
ELLIOT	..	.. <i>History of India as told by its own Historians</i> .
ERE	..	.. <i>Encyclopædia of Religion & Ethics</i> .
HR	..	.. <i>History of Rajaputana</i> .
GL	..	.. <i>Gujarat and its Literature</i> by K. M. Munshi.
IA	..	.. <i>Indian Antiquary</i> .
JASB	..	.. <i>Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal</i> .
JAOS	..	.. <i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i> .
JBBRAS	..	.. <i>Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society</i> .
JRAS	..	.. <i>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (London)</i> .
KC	..	.. <i>Kumarapala-Charita</i> by Charitryasundaragani.
KK	..	.. <i>Kirti-Kaumudi</i> by Someshvara.
KP	..	.. <i>Kumarapala-Pratibodha</i> by Jinamandana Gani.
KY	..	.. <i>Kitab-i-Yamini</i> of 'Utbi translated by Renolds.
KZA	..	.. <i>Kitab-Zain ul-Akhbar</i> of Abu Sa'il 'Abd-ul-Hay b. ad-Dahhak b. Muhammad Gardizi edited by Mahmud Nazim.
Mbh	..	.. <i>Mahabharata</i> .
NC	..	.. <i>Navasahasanka-Charita</i> by Padmagupta.
PC	..	.. <i>Merutunga's Prabandha-Chintamani</i> .
PCa	..	.. <i>Prabhavaka-Charita</i> .
RT	..	.. <i>Kalhana's Rajatarangini</i> , edited by Stein.
TA <i>Tahaqat-i-Akbari, Bibliotheca Indica</i> , translated by B. Dey.
TF <i>Tarikh-i-Farishta</i> , edited by Briggs.

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SUPPLEMENT

COMPLETION OF THE LAST PHASE

After the printing of this book was over, happy tidings were received of the completion of the last phase of the temple of Sri Somanatha.

The installation ceremony of the *linga* was performed on 11th May 1951 by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of the Republic of India, in the presence of a huge concourse of people who had come from every part of India to witness the restoration of this Shrine Eternal. Fourteen years thereafter, on 13th May 1965, the booming of 21 guns announced the rising of the flag of Sri Somanatha temple on its *shikhara* at a height of 155 feet to mark the completion of *Kalasha Pratishtha* and *Dhwajadanda* ceremony at 1 P.M. by His Highness the Jam Sahab of Navanagar, Chairman of the Somanatha Trust. On this memorable and auspicious occasion His Highness the Jam Sahab announced a munificent donation of Rs. 1,01,101/- to the Somanath Trust.

The *Prasadabhisheka* and *Kalasha Pratishtha* functions were held ceremoniously at Prabhas Patan for a full week from 7th May 1965 to 13th May 1965. The ceremony was performed with proper religious rituals by 51 learned Brahmins and attracted a very large number of pilgrims every day who came to witness the same and have the *darshan* of Bhagawan Somanatha.

It may be recalled here that the decision to reconstruct the shrine of Sri Somanatha was announced by the late Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel on 13th November 1947 at a huge public meeting held at the Ahalyabai Temple. It was from the footsteps of this dilapidated temple that he announced with sea-water in his hands :

“On this auspicious day of the New Year, we have decided that Somanatha should be reconstructed. You, people of Saurashtra, should do your best. This is a holy task in which all should participate.”

The new temple has been completed by stages at a total expense of Rs. 24,92,000. Its overall height is 155 feet and the foundation has gone up to a depth of 30 feet at places. No temple of this size, architecturally known as ‘‘Kailas Maha Meru Prasada,’’ has been built in India for the last 800 years. The stone used from first floor upwards is of the same type as the stone originally used for constructing the previous Somanatha temple. The architecture is also the same.

Thus, with the completion of the final phase of this Shrine Eternal, the nebulous dream of a visionary, Shri Munshiji, the author of this book, has become a reality.

A photograph of the completed temple has been added to the book.

JUNE 1, 1965.

PUBLISHERS

PART I

THE STORY OF SOMANATHA

CHAPTER I

SOMANATHA—LORD OF SOMA, THE MOON GOD

THE shrine of Somanatha is situated in Prabhasa Patan or Devapattana, on the southern coast of Saurashtra.

Saurashtra formed part of the vast Indo-African-Australian continent¹ known as the Gondwana land long before the Himalayas rose. Gujarat and Saurashtra had a long proto-historic past² when they had contacts with Sindh and other north-western areas by land and sea. Pre-historic man had his settlements in Saurashtra on the banks of rivers.³

India became a geographical unit; new races began to pour in. The portion of Saurashtra, the valleys of the North-West Frontier Province, Sindh, the Punjab, the upper Doab, if not the whole of the Gangetic valley, and the habitable parts of Rajputana, came to be inhabited by a race with a uniform culture. It is called by scholars the Indus Valley civilization. It may more appropriately be called Proto-Indian culture.

Somanatha is the shrine of God Shiva, popularly styled Mahadeva, the Great God. He was worshipped five thousand years ago in the Indus Valley, not in the form of a phallus but as Pashupati, the lord of the animal world. He is depicted as a nude deity on a seal found at Mohenjo-daro, with horns and three faces. He is carved as seated on a stool with his heels pressed closely together in yogic pose. Surrounding him are a number of animals—two deer or antelopes, a rhinoceros, an elephant, a tiger and a buffalo. The humped bull—Nandi—too, was a sacred animal.⁴

1 K. M. Munshi, *The Glory That Was Gurjaradesha*, Vol. I, p. 7.

2 Ibid., Vol. I. p. 13.

3 Ibid., Vol. I. p. 15.

4 Mackay, *Indus Civilization*, p. 70.

It is likely that Shiva, as depicted on the seal, may have had four faces, one of which was invisible; but images with three faces are common to several parts of India.

It is likely that Trimukha Shiva of Mohenjo-daro suggested the subsequent evolution of the Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, and the *Shiva Purana*, when it places Shiva as the first of the gods, has possibly a historical basis to support the tradition.

The shrine of Somanatha in Prabhasa is traditionally as old as creation: it is certainly pre-historic. The Mahishmati of Vedic times, which was near Broach on the Narmada, may have been another centre of some ancient Pashupata cult; for Sahasrarjuna, its ambitious ruler of traditional history, got his prowess from Pashupati; and Parashurama, his vanquisher, also secured his irresistible weapon from the same deity.

The original name of Saurashtra was Kushavrata. The place where the Yadavas founded Dwarka was originally called Kushasthali.¹ The Phœnicians also called themselves the sons of Kusha.² An old legend connects Dwarka with Punyajanas which may conceivably be a variant of Pani³ or Panik of the Vedas or the Phoinix or the Phoinikes of the Greeks, known in history as Phœnicians. Long before their settlement in Greece, the Phœnicians were mariners. Their original home was on the Erythræan Sea which is identified with the Persian Gulf or the Arabian Sea. These Pretero Phœnicians, the sons of Kusha, can therefore be taken to have made an early settlement at Kushasthali.

The first name of the peninsula after Kushavrata, was Suratha, Saurashtra being a Sanskritised form like Maharashtra and Rashtrakuta. The original name Ratha

1 *Hari* I. 11. 4.

2 Waddell, *Makers of Civilization*, p. 80.

3 Max Muller—*Chips from a German Workshop*, ii, 65.

or Redda is likely to have a close connection with the word 'shur-rudd' of the Assyrians and may indicate the Rathiks of the Ashokan inscription. The name survives in the Reddis of Telangana and the Rathods of the North. We can, therefore, assume that in very early times, the shores of Saurashtra were studded with places where maritime races lived or came to trade and Prabhasa, as an ancient port, was a centre of international contact.

CHAPTER II

PRABHASA IN HISTORICAL TRADITION

PRABHASA was a traditionally sacred place even in the days of Dharmaraj, the son of Pandu. The *Mahabharata* refers to it again and again.¹ It was well known as a holy place—situated as it was—where the river Sarasvati flowed into the sea. It was also connected with Soma, the Moon God. Daksha had twenty-seven daughters, corresponding to twenty-seven constellations, all married to Soma. Rohini, however, was the most beautiful of them, and Soma continued to live with her. His other wives naturally complained to Daksha, who somehow induced him to be fair with them. But Soma's fascination for Rohini was irresistible; he went back to Rohini. The other wives once more approached Daksha, who now threatened to curse him. His threats, however, were not heeded. The neglected wives again complained to their father. Daksha thereupon cursed him, saying, 'Thou shalt wane.'

As a result Soma, the Moon God, began to shrink day by day. To escape the curse he performed sacrifices, but

¹ *Mbh.* 1.218.2-4, 8; 3.12.15; 82.58; 88.20; 93.10; 118.15; 9.35.41; 78.86; 13.25.9; 94.3; 14.83.13.

they were of no avail. He continued to wane; the herbs became tasteless; vegetation failed to grow. Ultimately the gods prevailed upon Daksha to retract his curse. He did it on certain conditions. Soma should behave well with all his wives and take a bath in the sea at the Prabhasa Tirtha where the river Sarasvati joins it and worship Mahadeva there; if he did so, he would, during one half of the month, wane every day, but during the other half, wax every day. Daksha finally told Soma not to disregard women and the Brahmanas.¹

Since then, Prabhasa has been the foremost of all Tirthas. Soma—so runs the legend—bathes there on every recurring day of the dark night and regains his form and beauty.

On the West Coast, Prabhasa was the most sacred of all places in the days of the Bharata war. Even the *rishis*—the sages—collected there². It was the favoured spot of two gods: Indra and Surya.³ It had the quality of removing all sins; a sea-bath at Prabhasa led one to heaven. The Pandavas came to this sacred spot and performed austerities. So did Shri Krishna and Balarama; Arjuna also came here from Gokarna on his way to Dwarka⁴. Janamejaya Parikshita, the emperor, also visited it⁵. Long before Shri Krishna led the Yadavas to Saurashtra, Prabhasa was recognised as a sacred place, attracting pilgrims from all over the country.

The sacredness of the place, even then, was derived from the fact that Soma saved himself from Daksha's curse by bathing there and praying to Shiva at the shrine there.

¹ *Index to the names in the Mahabharata*, p. 553, by S. Sorensen.

² *Mbh.* 3.91-10; *Mbh.* 13.94.3.

³ *Mbh.* 3.130.7.

⁴ *Mbh.* 14.83.14 *Bom. Ed.* *Mbh.* 3.118.15.

⁵ *Mbh.* 12.152.12.

The sanctity of the deity at Prabhasa, therefore, was accepted even at that time.

CHAPTER III

DEHOTSARGA—THE HALLOWED SPOT

SAURASHTRA was the adopted home of Shri Krishna, acclaimed for centuries as 'God Himself', and no greater or richer integrated personality, reaching out to divine perfection, has been known to life or fiction, and no higher message was given to man than in his exhortation to Arjuna in the *Bhagavadgita*.

Many places in Saurashtra are reminiscent of him. He killed the tyrant Kamsa of Mathura and reinstated Ugrasena on the throne. When Jarasandha, the powerful ruler, invaded Mathura, he led his people, the Yadavas to safety in Dwarka in Saurashtra. Then he kidnapped and married Rukmini. In the *Mahabharata* he appears for the first time at the *svayamvara* of Draupadi, and thereafter dominates the events in the Epic throughout. He gave presents to the Pandavas at their marriage with Draupadi, and saw that they were settled at Indraprastha.

In the course of his pilgrimage, Arjuna visited Prabhasa. Shri Krishna came to see him and took him to Dwarka. On his advice, Arjuna carried off his sister Subhadra and married her.

Shri Krishna then assisted Bhima, the second of the Pandava brothers, in slaying Jarasandha, thus qualifying them for the imperial sceptre. At the *rajasuya yajna* celebrated by the Pandavas to proclaim their newly acquired imperial status, he washed the feet of the Brahmanas and received the first worship—*agrapuja*—as the only person

fit for the honour. This shows that even during his lifetime, he had come to be treated as a near divinity.

After the successful performance of Yudhishtira's *rajasuya* sacrifice, Shri Krishna returned to Dwarka. During the exile of the Pandavas, he visited them thrice in the forests and attended the marriage of Abhimanyu, the son of his sister Subhadra and Arjuna, with Uttara, the daughter of the king of Virata.

The preparations for the war between the Pandavas and Kauravas commenced. Shri Krishna's help was solicited by both sides. When given a choice between himself and the Yadava army, Shri Krishna was selected by Arjuna as against Duryodhana who preferred the Yadava army. He himself went as an envoy of the Pandavas to Hastinapura, the capital of the Kauravas, seeking peace and justice.

When the great battle of Kurukshetra began, Shri Krishna did not fight personally; he remained the guide, philosopher and the supreme strategist of the battle. He inspired Arjuna to fight and revealing himself as Vaasudeva, the Supreme, asked him to be 'His instrument' in destroying the sinners. Incidentally, on the field of battle, he delivered the message of eternal life—the *Gita*.

After installing Yudhishtira on the throne at Hastinapura, Shri Krishna returned to Dwarka. He came again to Hastinapura to attend the *Ashvamedha* sacrifice performed by Yudhishtira. He returned to Dwarka again and lived happily for the rest of his life.

When the Yadavas went to Prabhasa for a holiday, they drank wine freely and indulged in a bitter internecine fight. As a result the entire Yadava race was destroyed; only Shri Krishna, his brother Balarama and two others, Daruka and Babhru, survived.

Shri Krishna then sent his charioteer, Daruka, to

Hastinapura with the news and a message to Arjuna to come to Dwarka to look after the women and children of the tribe. He then consoled the forlorn women and children; they were to accompany Arjuna to Hastinapura, as he foresaw that Dwarka would be swallowed up by the sea. Having consoled them, he left Dwarka and retired to a dense forest.

Arjuna came to Dwarka, took with him Vajra, the only surviving grandson of Shri Krishna and successor to the throne of Mathura, and left for Hastinapura with the grief-stricken women of the tribe.

When he was in deep meditation, Shri Krishna was hit by the arrow of a hunter, who mistook him for a deer. The *Mahabharata* and the *Puranas* are silent as to the location of the spot where Shri Krishna was struck by the hunter.

Bhalakatirtha, at a short distance from the Somanatha temple, is traditionally the spot of Krishna's death. From here he was taken to the confluence of the Hiranya, Sarasvati and Kapila—eastern Triveni—at Somanatha, where it was ceremonially cremated. This *Dehotsarga*, the spot where Shri Krishna left his mortal body is the most hallowed spot in India.

The *Mahabharata* is definite that the Yadavas, Andhakas and Vrishnis destroyed each other at Prabhasa, and Shri Krishna and Balarama died there. There is no dispute as to the location of Prabhasa, for it was situated on the coast where river Sarasvati joins the sea. The *Puranic* references also indicate that Prabhasa, the Raivataka Mountain and Shri Krishna's capital Dwarka were near each other. Raivataka is the modern Gir Hill range, which runs along the southern coast of Kathiawar.

Various theories have been propounded about the identification of these places. I have, after some analysis,

come to the conclusion that the old Dwarka, which was near Prabhasa, was submerged in the sea. When Shri Krishna as 'God Himself' attracted the worship of the Hindus in the fourteenth century, there was a search for Dwarka and the place now known as Dwarka in the north-western corner of Saurashtra was fixed upon as Shri Krishna's Dwarka. There is no doubt whatever that modern Dwarka has nothing to do with Shri Krishna's Dwarka which was very near the Gir Hills and Prabhasa.

There is an interesting speculation which deserves careful notice. Banasura, the father of the bride of Shri Krishna's grandson, had something to do with Assyria; Shonitapura, his capital, has the same meaning as Babylon, 'the City of Blood'. This is not a mere accident; Panchajanya, the demon from whom Shri Krishna saved the son of his teacher Sandipani, who had been dragged into the sea at Prabhasa, might have been an Assyrian trader who had kidnapped the boy.

If there is any factual basis in this legend, it shows that sea power, both naval and mercantile, was directed from Prabhasa from the most ancient times.

Prabhasa, therefore, was an ancient port. Long before the Bharata war, it was recognised as a holy place of all-India importance. As already stated, it was associated with Soma, the Moon God. There was a shrine of Shiva where the devout worshipped after bathing in the Tirtha located on the spot where the Sarasvati joined the sea. Shri Krishna was associated with Prabhasa where his kinsmen died fighting, and where, on the banks of the Hiranya, he left his mortal body. Later tradition also attributed to him a temple of Somanatha built in silver.¹

¹ K. M. Munshi—*The Glory That Was Gurjaradesha*, Pt. I, p. 111.

CHAPTER IV

SHIVA—GUARDIAN OF NATIONAL RESURGENCE

(A.D. 1 - 400)

THERE is an ancient tradition, not to be discarded even on geological grounds, that the low-lying land between the mainland and Saurashtra was once covered by the sea in which the Vedic Sarasvati emptied her waters.

It is equally worth noting that the *Puranas* refer to Nagas living in *Patala*.¹ *Patala*, later considered to be the nether regions, is associated with Sindh. The *Puranic* legend refers to the river Sarasvati having brought *Vadavanala*, *Aurvanala* or *Kalagni*, submarine fire, to be merged in the sea near Prabhasa. There are also references to *Patala* as the land of the Nagas, as also the place where *Vadavanala* found a haven on earth. This sheath (*Vivara*) was, according to the *Skanda Purana*, located in Prabhasa.

Bali, the king of Asuras (a term also applied to the Nagas), who performed the ten *asvamedhas* (horse-sacrifices), was forced to withdraw into *Patala*, where he thereafter ruled.

Somanatha is also referred to as the *Kalagni* form of Shiva. The famous *Linga* of Shiva, known as Hatakesvara, in Saurashtra also came from *Patala*. One of the names of Shiva is also *Vadavamukha*.

It can, therefore, be concluded that Shiva, as the Lord of Destruction, was at one time, identified with the God of Fire in Prabhasa, a tradition clearly indicative of some geological action. In Prabhasa, Shiva was fire. The *tirtha* where the Sarasvati met the sea in Prabhasa was once called *Agnitirtha*.

1 Bhajam—Vide references Gujarat 'Somanatha', pp. 15 and 17.

Mahishmat, the father of Sahasrarjuna of the *Puranic* tradition, wrested an ancient port near Broach on the Narmada from the Nagas in order to found Mahishmati.

Two facts emerge from these references. First, the Nagas were associated with the region from the mouth of the river Indus to the mouth of the Narmada and perhaps further south. Secondly, Prabhasa was associated with the Nagas referred to as belonging to *Patala*. Thirdly, the *Linga* of Somanatha, before the earliest period of Aryan tradition, was a divinity connected with *Patala* and the Nagas. With the dawn of history, the Shiva-worshipping Nagas emerged as a confederacy of powerful tribes.

When the Shunga empire was broken, the Scythians, the Bactrian Greeks and the Kushanas entered India and imposed their rule on the people. They were 'irascible, contemptible and irreligious'; then arose the great Naga power to fight the foreigners.

Linking up the hiatus in the imperial tradition between the Shunga emperors of the pre-Christian era and the Gupta emperors of the fourth century of Christ, the Nagas included the Bharashivas and Vakatakas, who practically dominated the North, and the Satavahanas who dominated the South. The Empire of the Bharashivas included Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Vindhya Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Madhya Bharat, Rajasthan and the Mudra Republics in East Punjab.¹ In the middle of the third century, the Vakatakas rose to power, of whom Pravarasena was recognised as the Emperor of Aryavarta.

The rise of the Bharashivas represented a national upsurge to deliver the country from the foreign rule of the Shakas and the Kushanas. Of this resurgence, God Shiva was the symbol and the guardian. "We find Shiva everywhere in this period," says Jayaswal. "The era is

¹ K. P. Jayaswal, *History of India*, p. 55.

surecharged with the belief that the Destroyer Himself has founded the Bharashiva State, that He is the guarantor of the king, of the people and of the Bharashiva kingdom."¹ The Nagas were styled by the *Puranic* traditions as serpents. Takshaka and Karkotaka from whom one can protect oneself by invoking Shiva, their Lord and Master, were in fact the names of Naga rulers.

The Nagas performed ten *ashvamedhas* at Kashi and Bhrugukachehha on the Narmada. Shiva and Nandi were added as honorific titles by kings and emperors to their names. Their images were carved on official seals as the emblem of Varnashrama Dharma.²

The tremendous political events led to a cultural renaissance of which Shiva was the centre. Ganga was the emblem of purity. The sacredness of the bull and the cow was accepted as a national creed.³ The great literary movement in favour of Sanskrit began in this period and was carried forward by the Vakatakas and the Guptas. Sanskrit became the language, not only of religion but also of refinement and the courts.⁴ As Dr. Jayaswal puts it, the foundations of modern Hinduism were laid by the Naga emperors and its edifice was built and elaborated by the Guptas. The Naga Empire included Gujarat and evidently the existence of the First Temple in this period shows that Prabhasa was a place sacred to Shiva.

1 K. P. Jayaswal, *History of India*, p. 49.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 73.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 61.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 95.

CHAPTER V

SHIVA AND HIS WORSHIP

THE worship of Shiva and His consort Shakti dates from pre-historic times and is today the basic layer of religious belief in India. It has varying strata from the most terrifying or obscene rituals, confined to fast decaying obscure cults, to aspiring philosophic concepts, noble traditions of universal welfare and the most human of social urges.

The earliest Shaiva literature was associated not only with Yoga but also with magic and incantations. Prabhasa was the centre of the great *Shaivayogis*, and some of the great sages referred to in the *Puranas* were masters of their sacred lore, *Somavidya*.

From the earliest days of *Tantric* literature of Shaivism, Soma is found closely associated with Shiva, even to the extent of being referred to as one of the names of Shiva. According to *Somavidya*, the completely moonless night in the month, if it falls on a Monday which is sacred to Shiva, is considered most appropriate for worshipping Him and any religious act done on that day is believed to give manifold merit. *Skandapurana* details the five things which give the highest religious merit: 'Sarasvati, the river, the sea, the eclipsed moon, and the *darshana* of God Somanatha.' "To visit Prabhasa on a moonless night, which falls on a Monday, to undertake a fast, to bathe where the Sarasvati meets the sea, and to have a *darshana* of Somanatha" gives the merit of numberless religious sacrifices.

One of the intriguing verses, of later date of course, in the *Rigveda* refers to the place where the Ganga, the Yamuna and the ancient Sarasvati met, presided over by Someshvara. Al-Biruni refers to a *Somapurana* which has not been traced so far.

All these facts are only set out to show that Shiva, Somanatha, Shiva worship, *Somavidya* and the order of *Shaivayogis* point to the worship of Shiva having its origin in the pre-historic period; its relics can still be found in rituals of a repulsive character, with some obscure sections of the cult followed in far away places. The sect of *aghoris*, for instance, live in funeral grounds and besmear themselves with ashes following Shiva in His aspect of Bhairava. They follow the tradition of long forgotten tribes to whom Shiva, wearing the garlands of skulls and the ornaments of serpents and with the body besmeared with ashes, was the tutelary deity. Even today, among the Shaivites of the purest hue, there is the traditional ritual of the application of ashes to the forehead and the hands.

Shiva's spouse Uma, Parvati, or Shakti, known to all early human civilizations as the Mother Goddess, is the goddess who protects, blesses and saves. Though in His one aspect as *Ardhanarishvara*, half god, half woman, Shiva is considered indissoluble from his spouse, the *yogis* who worshipped them both, true to human nature, separated the worship into cults of entirely different character. The *Shaivayogis* were adepts in *hathayoga* which is the art of completely controlling the body, including all its vital activities. One of the highest stages for a *hathayogi* is that of *urdhvaretas*, which, among other things, includes a mastery over the muscles and nerves of the sexual organ, in order to eliminate sex desire and attain extraordinary longevity. This mastery is indicated in the icon of Pashupati of the Mohenjo-daro period, and in the eleventh century image of Lakulisha of the Fourth Temple of Somanatha.

Another ancient cult, no doubt, is the sex worship of the goddess of fertility. Shiva's spouse is worshipped not only as Parvati or Amba, the Divine Mother, as Shakti, the Goddess of power and strength, as Chandi the fear-

some goddess destroying the wicked but also as Amarasundari of immortal beauty, the goddess of sublimation from whom flows all creativeness. One of the cults of the last named goddess has its counterpart which favoured the mysteries of ancient Rome and Greece.

Shiva is inseparable from Ganga which, flowing from His matted locks, represents purity and gives India its belt of plenty and high intellectual aspirations; from His consort Uma, the benign Mother; from His son Kartikeya, the God of War, worshipped by the Gupta emperors, and worshipped today in the south as Subrahmanya; from the highly lovable Ganapati, the elephant-headed god of auspiciousness, intellect, wealth and valour, today the presiding deity of every home where purity and happiness reign; from Nandi, the beloved father of the bovine race, which, from time immemorial, is linked with Indians in every aspect of life and unites them in sympathy with the animal world and secures them economic stability.

If the Aryan gods dominated the Indian thought, the pre-Aryan Shiva was at its head, the Ishana as the later Vedic literature of the *Brahmanas* would have it, or the Mahadeva, the Great God, as the *Puranas* proclaim Him to be. And from Kailasa in the Himalayas where Shiva has His abode and from the twelve eternal shrines of *Jyotirlingas*—of which Somanatha is the foremost—to the most obscure village temples resides the Great God; not only the God of the great and the learned but the Guardian of the lowliest of the devout, whose temple doors are never closed to any one, however fallen.

The conception of Shiva and Parvati in Indian culture is inspiring. The noblest conception of the spiritual unity of man and wife, ever-loving and eternal, achieved by a joint sublimation of the sex instinct is immortalised in Parvati-Parameshvara, to quote Kalidasa, as 'indissolu-

ble 'as word and sense' or the *Ardhanarishvara* of the Shaivite literature. No higher example of the aspiration which Shiva worship provides is afforded than by the hymn of self-realization, *Nirvanashataka*, composed by Shankaracharya, the greatest of Indian philosophers and religious reformers:

*I am not the mind or the intellect,
Nor am I the Self nor the cognising power;
Neither am I the ear, the tongue, the nose, the eyes;
The sky is not I, nor the land,
Neither light nor wind am I;
For, I am Bliss-Consciousness,
Shiva is in me and I am Shiva.*

*I am not made of breath, or of the five-fold moving
wind,
Nor of the seven bile, nor of the five sheaths;
Speech is not me, nor hands nor feet am I;
For I am Bliss-Consciousness,
Shiva is in me, and I am Shiva.*

*I know no hatred, nor love;
I covet not, nor does illusion shroud my eyes;
I have no pride, nor the touch of anger;
I belong neither to Dharma nor to wealth:
Neither to desire, nor to freedom;
I am Bliss-Consciousness,
Shiva is in me, and I am Shiva.*

*Transcended have I—both merit and demerit,
Even chants or sacred places, Vedas or the sacrifices,
have me not;
And happiness and misery;*

*Nor I am the oblation,
Neither the enjoyed nor the enjoyer,
Bliss-Consciousness I am,
Shiva is in me, and I am Shiva.*

*Death has no dread for me,
Neither doubts ever shake my calm;
Distinctions that part man from man, I know not.
I have no father, no mother even,
No brother, friend, teacher or pupil,
Nor have I another birth;
Thoughts agitate me not; forms no longer fetter me;
I am the lord of all my senses.
All attachment have I shed, and emancipation lures
me not,
For Bliss-Consciousness am I,
I am Shiva, Shiva is in me.*

CHAPTER VI

THE FIRST AND THE SECOND TEMPLES

ANOTHER parallel tradition connects Prabhasa with the Pashupata cult as a very important and ancient branch of Shiva worship. That the temple of Somanatha was the all-India centre of the Pashupata cult during historical times is indisputable.

Lakulisha born in the second century of the Christian era at Kayavarohana (modern Karvan) near Broach on the Narmada, was the last of the great Pashupata teachers. He was considered an incarnation of Shiva Himself. In the

Fourth Temple his image, *urdhvaretas*, like that of the Mohenjo-daro Pashupata has been found carved along the southern plinth. All the heads of the shrine during the Chalukya period were Acharyas of the cult.

Soma Sharma was the last great teacher who came to Prabhasa and settled down there, and was also considered an incarnation of God Shiva. His four sons are also mentioned as having settled down at Prabhasa Tirtha. This tradition is also preserved in the *Shivapurana* and may be taken to be authentic.¹

Long before the second century A.D., the head of the Pashupata cult had his headquarters at Prabhasa. Somanatha as the principal shrine of Shiva can therefore be taken to have been established at least by the beginning of the Christian era to which period perhaps the First Temple belongs.

Religious literature of Shaivism is reminiscent of the early importance of Somanatha. The Karle and the Nasik inscriptions show that the Scythian conqueror Nahapana worshipped at Prabhasa Tirtha.²

Some of the Bactrian Greek Kshatrapas and the Bharashaiva and Vakataka rulers were devotees of Shiva. It is, however, surprising that there is no epigraphic record of Prabhasa or Somanatha during the Gupta period (A.D. 320-500). Saurashtra was almost a forbidden land for law-abiding Indians of the Madhyadesha, and under the Gupta emperors who were all devoted to Vishnu, this shrine was, perhaps, under an eclipse.

About A.D. 470 Saurashtra, with its capital Valabhi, drifted away from the Gupta Empire to become an inde-

¹ *Shivapurana* — Saptamavayaviyasamhita — Uttarabhaga : adh. 7.5.

Ibid., Chaturthakoti-rudra samhita—Vs. 21-24. *Vayupurana*—Mitra's Ed. Vol. I., adh. 23, 201-02.

² *El.* VII. p. 57; *El.* VIII. p. 78.

pendent kingdom under Senapati Bhatarka of the Maitraka family. This kingdom came to include the district of Kaira and part of Malwa on the mainland by A.D. 722. The Valabhi kings were very powerful and some of them were devout worshippers of Shiva. But Shiladitya I leaned towards Buddhism. Dhruvasena II, Baladitya, the son-in-law of Emperor Shri Harsha, ruled over modern Northern Gujarat.

A few years later, in A.D. 649, part of Southern Gujarat, comprising the territory then known as Bhrugukachchha, formed part of the territory of Dharasena IV (A.D. 640-49) who, for some time, bore the imperial title derived from his grandfather Shri Harsha. It was at this time that the Second Temple was constructed and to this period must also be ascribed the defaced Brahmi inscription found in the temple excavations.

The *garbhagriha* of the Second Temple was constructed on the spot where the First Temple stood. It had possibly an open *sabhamandapa*. Terraced steps of Kanjur stone led from it to the sea on both sides and on the south was constructed a retaining sea-wall. These were all found imbedded in the earth.

Yuan Chwang, the great Chinese pilgrim, visited Saurashtra between A.D. 641-644. The pilgrim found the land and the customs of the people to be the same as on the mainland. Population was dense. Religious institutions flourished.

The capital, Valabhipur, was then the home of power, learning and commerce; the people were happy and prosperous; the merchants carried on intensive commercial activity. More than a hundred merchants in the city were worth over a lakh each; rare and valuable articles secured from distant places were amassed by these rich men.¹ The

¹ BRW. II. 266-268; also *The Glory That Was Gurjaradesha*. Pt. III. pp. 28-29.

courts of Valabhi kings abounded in learned men who aimed at literary efforts after the fashion of Bana and Dandin.

Yuan Chwang was, however, not interested in Hindu shrines; his only interest was in Buddhist monasteries.

Under Dharasena IV (A.D. 640-649) Valabhi was still a magnificent city. Dandin, who wrote during his time, has given a fine description of the city and its merchant prince Grihagupta, who was the owner of many seafaring vessels.¹ Prabhasa was an international port during the whole of this period.

About the beginning of the eighth century, however, the Chalukyas of Badami overran the mainland and Valabhi lost its hold on old possessions. In A.D. 722 Valabhi lost the district of Khetaka Mandala to Jayabhata III, the feudatory of Chalukya Mangalaraja, then ruling at Navsari in modern South Gujarat.²

About the same time the Arabs turned their attention to India. In A.D. 711 Hajjaj, the Arab general, sent his son-in-law Muhammad-ibn-Qasim to fight Dahira, the Brahmana king of Sindh.³

Soon after Caliph Hisham (A.D. 724-43) appointed Junayad as governor of Sindh. Junayad in A.D. 725 sent Arab armies to invade Marwar, Broach, Ujjain, Malwa and Gurjaradesha. On their onward march, they defeated the king of Saurashtra and the king of Valabhi. Valabhi was then destroyed.⁴

Prabandha-Chintamani refers to Karpatika going on a pilgrimage to Someshvara about the time of the destruction of Valabhi. Was the Second Temple destroyed at this time? Or was it replaced on account of age?

1 Dandin—*Dashakumaracharita* (NS, 1936), p. 225.

2 BG. I., PT. I., p. 523.

3 CHI. III. 2.

4 BG I. Pt. I. 109 n2 also, *The Glory That Was Gurjaradesha* Pt. III, p. 50; A.I.I. 192-93.

CHAPTER VII

THE THIRD TEMPLE

(A.D. 800)

THE years A.D. 725-26 were fateful for India. In A.D. 726 Junayad was succeeded by Tamim as the governor of Sindh. Under his direction, an Arab army tried to enter the Decan between A.D. 731 and A.D. 738.¹ It was, however, defeated by the Chalukya prince Pulakeshi Avanijanashraya at Navsari. The Arab army, which had entered Saurashtra, penetrated up to Ujjain but was flung back by Nagabhata, the first king of the Pratihara dynasty. Nagabhata came from Gurjara or Gurjaradesha; that area is now partly included in Jaipur and partly in Mewar; and that is how Nagabhata's successors came to be styled Gurjaresavaras.

The *Gwalior Prashasti* announces Nagabhata's victory in the following manner:

He crushed the mighty hosts of the *mlechchhas*.
 Those foes of godly deeds.
 With terror-striking weapons as he stood
 He looked like
 Him of the four-arms.²

Nagabhata I founded the Gurjara power which held imperial sway at Kanauj for well-nigh hundred and fifty years. About A.D. 780 his grandson Vatsaraja ruled at Jhalor while Varaha or Jayavaraha ruled over the kingdom of Sauryas, which may perhaps be identified with Saurashtra.

About A.D. 792 Nagabhata II, son of Vatsaraja, came to the throne of Gurjaradesha, then growing from strength

¹ Elliot, I. 442.

² *Gwalior Prashasti* of Mihira Bhoja (verse 4).

to strength. His popular name was Ama. His mother, Sundaridevi, was a princess of the family of Yashovarman, who is described as belonging to the Maurya family. He is described as the Primeval Man born again, as once he was born as Nagabhata I,¹ for he restored the fortunes of Gurjaradesha which had fallen low at the time of his accession.

Immediately on coming to the throne, Nagabhata II proceeded to conquer the 'kings of Sindhu', possibly the Saindhava kings of Saurashtra. In A.D. 806-7, the indomitable cavalry of Saurashtra under Chalukya Bahukadhavala, supporting Nagabhata's army, defeated the army of Karnataka. In the wars of his overlord, he also fought against the Pala kings of Bengal.

Bahukadhavala's father, whose name cannot be deciphered in the inscription, was a feudatory Chalukya ruler of Saurashtra. His grandfather was Kalla. Kalla, therefore, may be accepted as the founder of the Chalukya dynasty in Saurashtra in the middle of the eighth century immediately after the destruction of Valabhi. If this surmise is correct, Kalla would be a contemporary of Nagabhata I.

By A.D. 815 Nagabhata II emerged as the unquestioned master of North India and made Kanauj his capital.² He is stated to have visited Prabhasa to worship Someshvara, travelling by way of Raivataka, Pindataraka, Shankhodhara and Dwarka.³

The shrine of Somanatha thus enjoyed great importance in about the first quarter of the eighth century. The red stone Third Temple, a large structure for the age, cannot be placed much later than A.D. 800 and may be taken to have been constructed during this period.

1 *Gwalior Prashasti* of Mihira Bhoja (verse 8).

2 *HR.* I. 181.

3 *Prabhavakacharita*, p. 108, st. 704-708.

After a short intervening reign of Ramabhadra, brother of Nagabhata, his son Mihira Bhoja the Great (A.D. 835-886), one of the most powerful rulers in Indian history, succeeded to the empire of Kanauj. Chalukya Bahukadhavala continued to rule Saurashtra. His son and successor, Balavarman, was the feudatory of Mihira Bhoja as also of his son, Mahendrapala (A.D. 890-910), and is recorded as achieving great victories. He defeated a certain Vishadha, slew Jajjapa and other kings and "thus freed the earth from the Huna race." He also beat back the Rashtrakuta forces on behalf of his overlord.

Mihira Bhoja also came to Saurashtra, possibly to quell a rebellion, and on his way defeated and killed Jayashekhar of the Chapa (Chapotkata, Chavada) family ruling at Panchasara in modern North Gujarat. This evidently gave rise to the Jain legend about Vanaraja, Jayashekhar's son.

According to the legend, Jayashekhar, before his death, sent away his wife Rupasundari in the charge of his brother Surapala, who turned into an outlaw. In the forest the queen was delivered of a son. He was named Vanaraja. Bhuyada, identified with Mihira Bhoja, grew fond of Gujarat but was induced to return to his capital under pressure from his generals.¹

There is a close similarity between the Jain version and the Brahmanical version as to how Vanaraja acquired power. The Jain version is that a king of Kanyakubja married the daughter of a king of Gujarat. Vanaraja was appointed to collect from Gujarat the marriage cess which the king had given to his daughter by way of dowry. He collected the cess and gave the collections to a deputation from Kanyakubja; then he waylaid them and secured the money which he used for consolidating his power.

¹ SJG. 12.

The Brahmanical version says that when the boy grew up, he organised a band of bandits and when the revenue collectors of Bhubhata, the king of Kanauj, were proceeding to Kanauj with the collections, he fell upon them and robbed them of the treasure.

The king of Kanauj and Bhubhata both refer to emperor Mihira Bhoja of Kanauj. Vanaraja is stated by the *Prabandhas* to have founded Anahilavada after a shepherd of the name of Anahila, who had pointed out to him a spot where a hare had chased a dog, a familiar legend about the foundation of many cities.

Merutunga gives A.D. 746 as the date of Vanaraja's installation, while A.D. 765 (V. S. 821 Vaishakha Shukla 2) is given in *Vicharashreni* as the date of the foundation of the city. Vanaraja is stated to have lived for one hundred and nine years.

The dates given in the legends relating to the Chavdas must, therefore, in the light of available evidence, be left as irreconcilable. The date A.D. 700, for the fall of Panchasara, is obviously wrong. In A.D. 700, Kanauj was ruled by Yashovarman, the patron of poets Bhavabhuti and Vakpati; Ama and Mihira Bhoja lived long after him.

The *Prabandhas* are not unanimous about the parentage of Vanaraja either. The *Puratana-prabandha-samgraha* makes him the son of Chamunda.¹ The *Prabhavakcharita* is silent on this point. The life of 109 years given by the *Prabandhas* to Vanaraja is legendary. The story that Vanaraja founded Anahilavada is disproved by another legend given by Jinaprabha in the *Vividha-tirtha-kalpa*. According to it, the city was built on the site of a

1 SJG. 51.

town known as Lakharama, which is stated to have been founded in A.D. 446.¹

The earliest reference to the Chalukyas having seized the royalty from the Chavadas is found in the *Vadnagar prashasti* of A.D. 1152, when legends of the foundation of Patan had been crystallised and had begun to be accepted as facts. Vanaraja is, for the first time, referred to in A.D. 1116 in a colophon of an *Apabhramsha* work named *Neminathacharia* by Haribhadrasuri, who completed his work in the residence provided by Prithvipala, a minister of Kumarapala.²

Both the versions agree on some important particulars. Bhubhata or Bhuyada, identified with Mihira Bhoja of Kanauj, was the overlord of Saurashtra. It is likely that he had given his daughter in marriage to the ruler of Saurashtra, possibly Balavarman or his son. An inchoate legend preserved in *Skanda Purana* also points to Mihira Bhoja having married a daughter of Saurashtra. *Skanda Purana* has a whole section of *Prabhasa Khanda* giving a detailed description of Somanatha and other shrines of Prabhasa and the traditions connected with them. Somanatha was then the biggest shrine in the country, and looking to the contacts of the imperial Pratiharas of Kanauj with Saurashtra, it would not be unreasonable to infer that under the Pratiharas, Prabhasa became a holy city, as important as, if not more than, Kashi.

In A.D. 899 Chalukya Avanivarman II³ called Yoga, the son and successor of Balavarman, ruled Saurashtra as a feudatory of emperor Mahendrapala, though under the direction of the military commander of the Emperor.

That a daughter of Mihira Bhoja or his immediate

1 *Sanatkumara charitam*; a section from Haribhadra's *Neminaha Chariu* edited by Hermann Jacobi, 152.

2 *EI.* IX. 2.

3 *The Glory That Was Gurjaradesha*, Pt. III, p. 69

descendant was married to one of the Chalukya descendants of Bahukadhavala, is supported by another testimony. A persistent tradition claims that Raji, the father of Mularaja, who founded the Chalukya rule at Anahilavada Patan in A.D. 942, came from Devapattana or Prabhasa. Probably, therefore, he was a descendant of Bahukadhavala and on his mother's side he drew his descent from Mihira Bhoja. He was descended from illustrious families, 'like the two wings of the swan' says the inscription¹. This would also explain Mularaja's interest in Somanatha.

About A.D. 920, Raji married Liladevi, the sister of a Gurjaresvara. The Jain tradition, making the ruler of Gujarat a descendant of Vanaraja of Anahilavada, is incorrect. Anahilavada then was not in any territory known as Gurjaradesha and Gurjaresvara was the title of the Pratihara Emperor, Mahendrapala of Kanauj. Liladevi was more likely the sister of Mahendrapala, the Gurjaresvara. This would explain how Mularaja after the break-up of the Pratihara Empire of Kanauj in A.D. 940, called himself by the title of his maternal ancestor, Gurjaresvara.

The Chalukya branch of Saurashtra ruled from A.D. 750 to 950. Prabhasa was a great port. Somanatha naturally was their guardian deity.

During the time of the Chalukyas of Anahilavada, the first available epigraphic evidence of Somanatha is found as of A.D. 960, referring to Ananta Deva, the Northern Shilahara who came with an army to worship Somanatha at Prabhasa.²

Somanatha, as represented by the Third Temple, was, between A.D. 800 and 950, the most important deity in the land, patronised by the Pratihara emperors and their feudatories of Saurashtra. Its magnificence in the beginning of

1 EI. XIX. 236f.

2 IA. IX. 34.

the eleventh century, therefore, sprang from its association with the Gurjareshvaras of Kanauj (725-950) and the great empire which they had built up.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GUARDIAN GOD OF GUJARAT

IN A.D. 942, Mularaja, the son of Raji and Liladevi, driven from his ancestral kingdom, captured Anahilavada Patan and acquired Sarasvatamandala, a small principality in the valley of the Sarasvati.¹ Hemachandra described him as the architect of Gujarat.

On the collapse of the Chalukyas of Saurashtra, Grahari-
pū, the Abhira King, had assumed power. He was a
wicked ruler. Mularaja is reported by Hemachandra to
have said:

“Grahari-
pū is unjust. He harasses the pilgrims
and kills the Brahmanas. How can I make friends with
such a wicked man? No one can even move freely in
Saurashtra. He has destroyed the sacred Prabhasa.
He has raided peaceful towns. The son of a *mlech-
chha* woman, he has been hunting deer on the Girnar.
Go and tell him to come out and fight me.”²

Evidently this was an attempt to wrest back his ancestral
kingdom from the usurper.

Mularaja marches on Grahari-
pū and captures him.
His ally Laksharaja of Kachchha, however, is killed in bat-

1 *The Glory That Was Gurjaradesha*, Pt. III, p. 108.

2 DV. IV 20ff.

tle.¹ Mularaja then proceeds to Prabhasa, worships Somanatha and returns to Anahilavada. Evidently Mularaja restored his ancestral shrine to its pristine glory.

Mularaja died in A.D. 997, having ruled for 55 years. He was a devout worshipper of Shiva, and it is clear from the epigraphic evidence that he constructed several temples of Shiva including the famous Rudramahalaya at Siddhapur.² The temple of Somanatha which he retrieved from Graharipu was the Third temple.

Mularaja's successors were: Chamunda (A.D. 996-1000), his sons Vallabharaja (six months) and Durlabharaja (A.D. 1009-1022). The kingdom of Anahilavada Patan then did not extend beyond the Sarasvata and Satyapura Mandalas, a small area round Anahilavada.

Siyaka II of the Paramara line who had vanquished Yoga, and his son Munja (A.D. 940 to A.D. 997), were great conquerors and ruled the mainland of Gujarat. Munja was succeeded by his brother Sindhuraja³ who appears to have been the overlord of Anahilavada rulers, though the latter carried on a precarious independence in their little principality. In A.D. 999 or at any rate about A.D. 1010, Bhoja, the son of Sindhuraja, one of the most magnificent rulers in history, came to the throne.⁴

Bhoja soon proved himself to be a great military leader. In addition to the hereditary Kshatriya forces, he organised a standing army. He realised the dangers in which he stood and decided to make a heroic effort to revive the strength of Gurjaradesha. He made friends with Gangeya Vikramaditya (A.D. 1010-1042), the Kalachuri king of Tripuri. Probably with his aid, he repelled the invasion of Indraratha of the Kesari Dynasty, the powerful king of

1 *Ibid* 103, 105, 127. *The Glory That Was Gurjaradesha*, p. 49.

2 *Rasamala* (Gujarati trs. 3rd Ed.), 61-68.

3 *NC*. XI 98.

4 *Paiyalachchi*, edited by Buhler, Intro. 9.

Yayatinagara or *Adinagara* in Orissa.¹ It was Bhoja's first combat with a powerful king; and the young hero inflicted a defeat on Indraratha. He also defeated king Goggala, an unidentified king, unless it be Goggiraja of Lata; but he had possibly died long before that time.

Having rendered his eastern frontier safe, he entered into an alliance with Rajendra Parakesari, the emperor of the South. Strengthened by this great diplomatic triumph, he invaded the dominions of the Western Chalukyas of Kalyani. First, he marched to the west to suppress the revolt of Kirtiraja, the Chalukya feudatory of Lata, who on Munja's death, had chosen to ally himself with his old chief. The rebel was vanquished; Lata was subdued.²

Bhoja then marched on Aparajita or Ari Kesari, the Shilahara king of Konkana, the most formidable feudatory of the Western Chalukya Jayasimha II. The Shilahara king was supported by his suzerain, but the confederate forces of Bhoja, Rajendra Chola and Gangeya Vikramaditya were too powerful for Jayasimha. In one campaign, Jayasimha appears to have worsted Bhoja; for it is stated in one of the Chalukyan inscriptions that Bhoja became 'a lotus to the moon', which was Jayasimha. "He searched out, beset, pursued, ground down and put to fight the confederated forces of Malava".³

The campaign, however, ended in favour of the powerful confederacy. The final battle with Jayasimha II was fought in Konkana. The king of Konkana became a vassal of Bhoja and a part of the Chalukya dominions including the Nasik district was annexed to the empire of Bhoja.

1 Udaipur Prashasti (*EI*, I, 233-238 St. 19). Adinagara may be modern Mukhalingam in the Ganjam district in the province of Madras.

2 Udaipur Prashasti *EI*, XIX, 71f; *IA*, XII, 204.

3 *IA*, V, 17.

The 'illustrious' Yashovarman, a feudatory, was placed in charge of Selluka Nagara near Kalyani.

By A.D. 1019, Bhoja had performed prodigies of valour and statesmanship. He had overcome the strongest foe in the East; attached the ambitious young Gangeya to himself; had established a firm alliance with the Chola emperor of the South; vanquished Jayasimha II, the Chalukya of Kalyani; and annexed a large part of his territory. The conquest of Konkana was, therefore, a great event and was celebrated as such throughout Bhoja's empire every year.

The Banswara grant recites that at the anniversary of the conquest of Konkana, Bhojadeva, having worshipped Bhavanipati, made the grant of the village of Vatapadraka, the modern village of Baroda, in the Banswara State. Another grant of a village near Indore in Central India also records the same festival.

In A.D. 1019, therefore, Bhoja was the unquestioned master of an empire, which included modern Gujarat. It is inconceivable that such a conqueror and so devoted a worshipper of Shiva, who built several temples of the god in the country, was not attracted by the most important Shaivite shrine in India.

CHAPTER IX

RISE OF A DESTROYER

WHEN the power of Gurjaradesha and Karnataka had been broken around A.D. 940 and the extreme south had begun to build a great empire, the north-west frontier was practically undefended except for the Brahmana Shahi kings of Kabul.

In the ninth century, the empire of the Caliphs had

been broken up and among the soldiers of fortune who carved out kingdoms for themselves were the Samanaid princes. Alp-tigin (A.D. 933-963), a slave of one of the Samanaid rulers, forced his master to recognise him as an independent chieftain and established himself at Ghazni. From his mountain fortress, he began to spread terror in India.

After him, his general, Sabuk-tigin, came to the throne in A.D. 977. He continued his master's policy and made a determined effort to destroy the confederacy of Indian kings which Jayapala of the Punjab led in defence of his motherland.

When Sabuk-tigin died in A.D. 997, his son, Abu-i-Qasim Mahmud, born in A.D. 971, was only the governor of Khorasan. Even when fifteen, he had surprised the veteran warriors of his father's court by his ability, so Sabuk-tigin, on his death-bed,—nominated Mahmud's younger brother Ismail as his successor.

A war of succession followed. Mahmud soon captured Ghazni and sent his brother into exile, and by his personality, will and genius, soon built up a marvellous striking power. Victory crowned his campaigns. Within three years of his capturing Ghazni, he subjugated Central Asia, Iran, Sistan and the adjoining regions.

In the year A.D. 1000, he turned his attention to India and gave it a foretaste of total war which she did not know before. In Central Asia unlike in India wars were fought for destruction and not for mere acknowledgment of the conqueror's suzerainty—*digvijaya*. There were no laws, no morals to circumscribe the barbarities of war; and Northern India, wrapped in the security which the Imperial Gurjars had provided, saw with startled awe, torrents of barbarians sweeping every thing before them, intent on murder, rape and loot.

The story of India's resistance to Mahmud's insatiable ambition is an epic of undying heroism. Jayapala, the Shahi king, once of Afghanistan, had sent a stern message to Mahmud's father. "You have heard of, and now know the heroism of the Indians. In difficulties, we fear neither death nor destruction. In affairs of honour and renown, we would woo the fire like roast meat, the dagger like the rays of the sun."¹

The story of internal feuds in India is a myth. In A.D. 900, the rulers of Delhi and Ajmer, Vijayapala of Kanauj (A.D. 955-990) and Dhanga, the Chandella, sent men and money to help Jayapala.² But the battle was lost, and Jayapala had to give up the dominions west of the Indus.

Eleven years later, in A.D. 1001, Mahmud again invaded Jayapala's dominions, defeated him, and extracted tribute. Jayapala had the proud soul of a hero. There were no chains which he did not know how to break. He gave up his crown, gave the legacy of resistance to his son, and courted the flames of the funeral pyre.

His son Anandapala did not pay tribute and Mahmud marched against him in A.D. 1004. Heroic Jayapala's equally heroic son first parleyed, and then refused submission. In the words of Utbi, "he placed the hand of repulse upon the face of the Sultan's request and took the road to stubbornness and obstinacy."³ Anandapala's land was plundered and pillaged. He had to fly to Kashmir. His son was taken prisoner.

Soon Mahmud was between two fires, the Turks under Ilak Khan, who had crossed the Oxus in Central Asia, and the Shahis. Then the generous culture of Aryavarta im-

¹ KY. 37. *The Glory That Was Gurjaradesha*, III, pp. 132-41.

² TF. I. 18.

³ IA. II 13 14.

pelled Anandapala to send a foolish message to his ruthless foe offering assistance: "I have been conquered by you, but I do not wish that another one should conquer you."¹ The tragedy of it was that Mahmud took the assistance, defeated Ilak Khan, and with his victorious army turned on the generous Shahi in A.D. 1008. The conquest of India is the conquest of culture by those who lacked it.

Anandapala faced his enemy with a powerful army, but in a heroic battle, he lost ground. The Punjab lay at the feet of Mahmud.

In A.D. 1009, he plundered the temple of Nagarkot. In A.D. 1011, he desecrated the shrine of Chakrasvamin at Thaneshvar. Anandapala, however, was still a rallying centre of resistance from Lahore. In A.D. 1012 he died and was succeeded by his son Trilochanapala. Mahmud, in spite of a treaty with his father, attacked him. Trilochanapala fought with unflinching heroism.

"Trilochanapala causing floods of blood to pour in battle resembled Shiva (*trilochana*) when sending forth the fire which burns the world at the end of the *Kalpa*.

After fighting crores of armour-clad soldiers in the battle, this (prince), who was experienced in affairs, came forth singly from among the foes pressing (around him).

When Trilochana (pala) had gone afar, the whole country was overshadowed by hosts of fierce *chandalas*, which (resembled clouds of) locusts."²

He failed. The Shahi power was shattered to smithereens. For eight long years, from some obscure place, with the immortal faith of those to whom death brings no defeat, Trilochanapala harassed Mahmud.

¹ KY. 327-28.

² RT. Stein's English translation I, 272-73.

“The Hammira did not breathe freely, thinking of the superhuman powers of the mysterious Trilochanapala.”¹

It had taken over fifteen years for the ruthless Ghaznavite father and son to wipe the Shahi power out of existence. And thus did Al-Biruni, the contemporary, sing their elegy :

“The Hindu Shahiya dynasty is now extinct, and of the whole house there is no longer the slightest remnant in existence. We must say that, in all their grandeur, they never slackened in the ardent desire of doing that which is good and right, that they were men of noble sentiment and noble bearing.”²

In A.D. 1018, the Punjab having been annexed to his dominions in part, Mahmud crossed the Yamuna and attacked the kingdom of Kanauj. Haradatta, a feudatory, submitted; and another, Kulachandra, when all his 50,000 warriors lay dead, killed his wife and himself with the same dagger.

Mathura was plundered. When the foreign army reached Kanauj, Rajyapala, its king, was defeated, and fled. Kanauj was sacked and the descendant of the imperial Gurjaras became a vassal of the ruler of Ghazni.

But against this imbecile travesty of imperial greatness rose a confederacy led by Vidyadhara Chandella (A.D. 1019-1022), the grandson of Dhanga, the most powerful king of the North. Vidyadhara killed Rajyapala, the puppet of the foreign ruler, and consolidated the forces. Even Bhoja looked upon this king as his master in the art of war. “Bhojadeva, together with Kalachuri Chandra, worshipped this master of warfare, full of fear, like pupils.”³

1 RT. VII. 64-65.

2 AI. II. 13.

3 EI. I. 219-222. Vs. 22.

In A.D. 1019, Mahmud marched to the Gangetic plains to give battle to Vidyadhara. There was an inconclusive engagement and Mahmud withdrew plundering all along his retreat. in A.D. 1022 he again marched on Kalanjara. Nanda, otherwise read as Bida or Vidyadhara, "then sent some verses which he had composed in the Hindu tongue in praise of the Sultan. The latter showed them to the eloquent men of Hindustan and other poets who were in attendance on him. They all praised them. The Sultan sent his congratulations, and a mandate conferring the command of 15 fortresses and other presents in return for them. Nanda also sent much treasure and precious gems for the acceptance of the Sultan."¹ The panegyrical accounts by Muslim chroniclers however prove the fact that after a long investment Mahmud could not capture Kalanjara, and the campaign ended with mutual gifts and compliments. The roaring tiger became a purring friend of Vidyadhara. Mahmud returned and gave up his ambitions as regards the Gangetic Valley.²

Mahmud's invasions up to A.D. 1022 was really three wars. The first was directed against the Shahis. It lasted for about eighteen years and ended in the annexation of most of the Punjab. The second was directed against Kanauj, which was only a pyrrhic victory. The third was against Vidyadhara Chandella and Mahmud gained nothing out of it. Vidyadhara had succeeded where the heroic Shahis had failed. Later Muslim chroniclers have altered the aspects of these frustrated attempts into successful religious wars against the holy shrines of India.

Frustrated in the east, the ambitious Sultan turned south.

1 TA. 14. KZA, 79-80.

2 IA. 1908, 142.

CHAPTER X

DESTRUCTION OF THE THIRD TEMPLE

IN A.D. 1022, Bhima, the son of Nagaraja (the brother of Durlabharaja) by the queen Lakshmidēvi (the daughter of the Chahamanas of Naddula), came to the throne of Anahilavada Patan. Nagaraja was the grandson of Mulraja whose guardian deity was Somanatha.

Mahmud's raid on Somanatha was a spectacular venture even if some of the details furnished by the Muslim chroniclers are accepted.¹ On the morning of Monday, October 18, 1025, Mahmud left Ghazni at the head of an army, which consisted of 30,000 regular cavalry. Elaborate preparations were made for food and water. Thirty thousand camels carried the supply of water; in addition, each trooper was provided with two camels for carrying water for him.

The invader rested at Multan, left it on November 26, and began his march through the desert. From Multan to Abu extends one vast, drab and dreary waste of sandy tract. Across this desert, fiery as Gehenna itself, with destruction yawning at every step, marched this reckless host, jubilant with the hopes of the coming loot. Its master, untiring and fierce as the wind which inexorably blew over these untrodden wilds of nature, goaded it on to the ends of his ambition.

According to the *Qasida*, Mahmud first captured the Indrava Pass close to the Chiklodara Mata hill near Palanpur.² By the end of December, he reached Patan. Bhima was taken by surprise and withdrew to the fort of Kanthkot in Kachchha.

Mahmud rested his army at Patan, replenished his

¹ TKA. IX. 48.

² JRAS. 1928, 235f.

stock of water and provisions, and left it unscathed. The army of Patan met the invader at Mundher—Modhera—and was defeated. Something more must have happened at this stage, which the Muslim chroniclers have omitted in their writings.

Young emperor Bhoja had attained considerable strength. Bhima of Patan was practically his vassal. Saurashtra was ruled by the Abhira king Mandalika, perhaps a feudatory of Bhima. Anarta, Khetaka Mandala and the valley of the Mahi formed part of Malwa; the valley of the Sabarmati was a part of Bhoja's dominion; and so was Lata. The story of Mahmud putting up one Dabishleem as a temporary ruler at Patan is a later legend. This part of the country was quite rich. What was it that made Mahmud suddenly leave such an easy conquest of a rich country and turn further west into the peninsula? What were the forces of Shakambhari, Medapata, Nadula and Malwa doing when Mahmud was rushing on them with such a mighty force? The only possible explanation is that the confederate forces of old Gurjaradesha stood in a solid phalanx in defence of their land and Mahmud thought it wiser to proceed to Somanatha rather than risk a battle with them.

From Modhera, Mahmud marched on Prabhasa Patan looting Delvada on the way. On January 6, 1026, he invested the fort of Somanatha. It was in charge of Mandalika, the descendant of the Abhira Gruharipu with whom Mularaja had fought.

According to the early Muslim chroniclers, the defenders fought with unabated heroism. At one stage, the army of the Turk entered the town but was driven out before eventide. On the 8th a terrible battle ensued. Fifty thousand Indian warriors laid down their lives in defence of their beloved shrine. Mahmud captured the fort, enter-

ed the temple sanctified by centuries of devotion, broke the *Linga* to pieces, looted the temple and burnt it to the ground.¹

The Third Temple of beautiful thin-grained red sand stone was thus destroyed. I saw the steps of the temple, the base of the pillars burnt and the debris of its south wall sloping seaward imbedded in the earth.

A sacred city like that of Somanatha armoured principally by the devotion and reverence of the whole country, fell a prey to an army pledged to fanatic destruction of alien shrines.

Mahmud could not enjoy the fruits of his lightning conquest of Somanath. He could not have halted there beyond a month.

Kitab Zain-ul-Akhbar, the earliest source, gives the following account:

“From that place Mahmud turned back, and the reason was that Param Deo, who was the king of the Hindus, was in the way, and the Amir Mahmud feared lest this great victory might be spoiled. He did not come back by the direct way, but took a guide and marching by the way of Mansura and the bank of the Sihun, went towards Multan. His soldiers suffered heavily on the way, both from the dryness of the desert and from the Jatts of Sind. Many animals and a large number of men of the Muslim army perished on the way, and most of the beasts of burden died, till at last they reached Multan.”²

Ibn-ul-Athir, writing two hundred years later, mentions the same reason for Mahmud's retreat, and corroborates Al-Gardizi:

“The Sultan raised his standard with the inten-

¹ Elliot II. 249.

² *Zain-ul-Akhbar*, pp. 86-87 of the Text.

tion of returning, but as Param Deo, one of the most powerful of the Rajas of Hindustan, had to be met on the way, he did not consider it advisable to fight with him at that time, under all circumstances; he turned towards Multan by way of Sindh. His troops suffered great privations *en route*, in some places, on account of scarcity of water, and in others, for want of fodder, but at last, after suffering great distress and hardship, he reached Ghazni in the year 417 A.H. (A.D. 1026)."¹

This explains why Mahmud did not meet with any opposition while entering Kathiawar. The confederate forces of 'Paramadeva' had trapped Mahmud in Kathiawar; and he had no chance of an escape except by a precipitate retreat through Kachchha to Sindh. Paramadeva, the King of the Hindus, was in the way. With the army of this king in hot pursuit of him, he started retreating as fast as he could, plundering Kanthkot on the way.²

Mandalika, the Abhira ruler of Somanatha, was also among the confederate princes who pursued Mahmud's army. Mahmud could not withstand the onslaught. The *Tarikh-i-Sorath* states that the Muslim army did not make a stand but fled. It was a rout.

"Shah Mahmud took to his heels in dismay and saved his life, but many of his followers of both sexes were captured....Turk, Afghan and Mughal female prisoners, if they happened to be virgins, were accepted as wives by the Indian soldiers....The bowels of the others, however, were cleansed by means of emetics and purgatives, and thereafter the captives were married to men of similar rank." "Low females were joined to low men. Respectable men were compelled

1 TA. 15-16.

2 DHNI, II. 961.

to shave off their beards, and were enrolled among the Shekavat and the Wadhel tribes of Rajputs; whilst the lower kinds were allotted to the castes of Kolis, Khantas, Babrias and Mers.’’¹

The *Devala Smriti* was in active practice.

Muslim chroniclers corroborate the fact that fever and thirst paralysed the bulk of the army. It was trapped into waterless regions. A large part of the army and most of the beasts of burden perished on the way. At last Mansura in Sindh was reached.

The formidable army, exultant with confidence, which Mahmud had led against Gurjaradesha, returned thinned in number and drooping in spirit. Ultimately, Mahmud, after a short halt at Multan, reached Ghazni on April 2, 1026. This expedition was a disastrous end to a brilliant series of raids. Mahmud gave up his designs on India thereafter.

The later panegyrists of Ghazni loved to sing of this episode as a great feat of Mahmud when, after two hundred years, it had come to be invested with fanciful details.

A wave of righteous hatred against the invader swept over the whole of Northern India. The grim defiance with which Jayapala and Anandapala faced Mahmud only reflected the mood of the country. Al-Biruni in his *Indika* writing in A.D. 1030 attests to the fanatic hatred felt by the Indians against the *mlechchhas*. “Mahmud”, says Al-Biruni, “utterly ruined the prosperity of the country and performed there wonderful exploits by which Hindus became like atoms of dust scattered in all directions and like a tale of old in the mouth of the people. Their scattered remains cherish, of course, the most inveterate aversion towards all Muslims.”²

¹ *Tarikh-i-Sorath*, p. 112.

² *AI*. I. 22.

From this time, Shiva the Destroyer, was the God of Resistance and in His name millions laid down their lives in defence of their faith and land till in A.D. 1665 and thereafter again in His name, the South under Shivaji and his successors with '*Har Har Mahadeva*' on its lips rose in resistance and destroyed the Mughal Empire.

CHAPTER XI

THE FIFTH TEMPLE

EMPEROR Bhoja of Malwa died in A.D. 1055. Karna of Chedi aided by Bhima of Anahilavada, invaded Malwa and possibly dethroned Jayasimha, son and successor of Bhoja (A.D. 1055-1066).¹ During this period Somanatha continued to be the guardian deity of the Chalukyas.

Between A.D. 995 and 1075 the status of the Chalukya kings of Anahilavada Patan was similar to that of a feudatory. Only in A.D. 1075 Karna, Bhima's son, fast career-ing towards higher status, crossed the Tapti river and annexed Lata (South Gujarat) including the Navasari District. In the inscription of that year, for the first time he calls himself by a title higher than that of a feudatory.² About this time the word Gujarabhumi also came to be applied to modern Gujarat. The Temple of Somanatha must have been reconstructed by this time, for an inscription mentions Siyaka II coming to Prabhasa and performing a *Svarna Tula* ceremony in A.D. 1045.³

The Arab travellers who visited India were all im-

¹ *The Glory That Was Gurjaradesha*, Pt. III, p. 154.

² *JBBRAS.* XXVI. 250.

³ *Important Inscriptions from Baroda State* ed. by Gadre.

pressed by the sanctity and importance of Somanatha Patan. Al-Biruni attested to its importance.¹ *Zain-ul-Akhbar*, in the middle of the eleventh century, stated: "In Hindustan, on the shores of the sea, there is a big city called Sumnat which is as sacred to the Hindus as Mecca to the Muslims."² Marco Polo, writing in the 13th century, mentions Somanatha as a great centre of trade.³

Gujarat, as it rose in importance, had to face the wrath of the neighbouring kingdom, Malwa; in fact, the kingdom of Gujarat had grown at the expense of Malwa only after Emperor Bhoja's death. During the last days of Karna, Gujarat was invaded by Lakshmanadeva of Malwa, a brilliant military leader.

Jayasimha, later also styled Siddharaja, the son of Karna and Minaladevi, came to the throne of Anahilavada Patan in A.D. 1096. Soon after, a general of his had to wash the feet of the Paramara king of Malwa, who had invaded Anahilavada, in token of humble submission.⁴ Jayasimha and the Queen Mother had been on a pilgrimage to the shrine of Somanatha.⁵ It was at this time that the Queen Mother induced her son to remit the tax on pilgrims of Somanatha.

Jayasimha slowly began to consolidate the fragments of his kingdom which had suffered heavily on account of the invasion by the ruler of Malwa. Having done so, the young Chalukya entered upon a career of conquest and built up an empire. He carried his victorious arms to Ajmer in the north and Kolhapur in the south. He also conquered Malwa and annexed it to his territory.

1 *Tahqiq Ma Li' L Hind* by Al-Biruni (English Translation by Sachau), Vol. II, p. 104.

2 Ray: *Dynastic History of Northern India*, Vol. II, p. 953.

3 *Marco Polo*: Yules' Edition, Vol. II, Ch. XXIX.

4 P.C. 58.

5 P.C. 57.

He was a patron of learning and arts and undertook great works of architectural magnificence. His capital Anahilavada Patan became one of the greatest centres of power and learning in India in the twelfth century. He has been, like Vikramaditya and King Arthur, immortalised in folk songs and tales of Gujarat for the last nine hundred years. He was the first architect of Gujarat, as Sardar Patel was the latest.

When Dhara, the capital of Malwa, fell in A.D. 1136,¹ its Paramara king was the disciple of Bhava Brihaspati, a man of vast learning. Born in Varanasi (Banaras) and of a remarkable personality even when young, Bhava rose to distinction as a leading light of the Pashupata cult.—His ardent apostleship of Shaivism brought him the reputation that he was the *avatara* of Nandishvara, the Bull God, sacred to Shankara. After taking the vow of Pashupatas, he performed penance and went on pilgrimages, initiating several kings as his disciples and getting temples built to Shankara. He lived first at Kanyakubja, and then moved to Ujjain, a great cultural centre of importance.

When Siddharaja returned from his conquest of Malwa, he brought the library of Bhoja to Patan, and invited Bhava Brihaspati to take charge of Somanatha. The conqueror was 'bound in brotherhood' to him.² Though venerated as the greatest Shaivite of the time, he was then no more than about forty years of age.

It was the heyday of Gujarat. For the first time, it had emerged in history as a kingdom, as a distinctive cultural unit and as the nucleus of an imperial power. Somanatha Patan or Devpattan, was one of the great entreports of India and one of its most active centres of learning and religious life. Bhava Brihaspati continued to be the head

¹ P.C. 59.

² EPSI. 186, Vs. 8.

of its holy shrine. In his old age, Jayasimha Siddharaja went on pilgrimage to Somanatha seeking a boon, a son: but it was denied to him.

Kumarapala of the junior branch succeeded Siddharaja in A.D. 1144, as emperor of Gurjaradesha. He was a great and wise monarch. After a short period of war-like activity he came under the influence of Hemachandra, the Jain polymath. The Jain *Prabandhas* claim that he gave up Shaivism and embraced Jainism in A.D. 1160 under the influence and advice of Hemachandra. I have examined this question in *Imperial Gurjaras* in detail.¹ There is no doubt that Kumarapala accepted Hemachandra as his guide, philosopher and friend, not only in social and ethical matters but also in matters political. He 'loved Jainism' as poet Someshvara puts it. But in the Udaipur inscription of A.D. 1164 and in the inscription of Bhava Brihaspati of the same year, he is described as a devotee of Shiva and he does not appear ever to have wavered in his devotion to his guardian deity. Even Hemachandra had to accompany Kumarapala to Somanatha Patan, to worship Somanatha and had to depend upon the god's mandate to vouch for his own sanctity.

The venerable Bhava Brihaspati then approached Kumarapala, then ruling over a flourishing empire, to repair the shrine. The Emperor agreed and Bhava then built the *meru prasada*, says the Bhadrakali inscription recording the event, and it looked 'august like unto mount Kailasa.'

The ceremonies were duly celebrated before a crowded assembly. The aged emperor, who attended in person, placed ornaments on Brihaspati's neck with his own hand, washed his feet with sandal-wood paste, and bowed low before him. He presented his own ring to him and granted

¹ *The Glory That Was Gurjaradesha*, Pt. III, p. 193.

him the town where “*dharma* flourished and food was freely distributed.” Then the emperor, with water in his hands, said, “I bestow on you, venerable Brahman, the title of *Ganda*. Enjoy it, together with your sons and grandsons till the Sun and Moon endure.” He also made a gift of a village to Bhava Brihaspati himself. The copper plate says, “like Bhava, there has not been a man, nor will there be any in future.” In humility, thereafter, he worshipped 505 saints.¹

Bhava Brihaspati’s wife Mahadevi, says the inscription, was a beautiful woman, highly accomplished. They had four sons of virtue and learning, Aparaditya, Ratnaditya, Someshvara and Bhaskara.

It was not a mere reconstruction of the temple, but of the whole town. It was extended by adding a strong fort-wall to the north and south of the temple. On the temple, Bhava placed gold pinnacles as also on the temples of Gauri, Bhimeshvara, Kapardi (Shiva), Siddheshvara and other divinities. A court room was made for the kings to assemble. A reservoir was also constructed for pure water. In front of Lord Somanatha, a *mandapa*, with beautiful and strong pillars, was erected and the seat for the deity was made in the form of a frog with a silver water-course. The temple of god Papamochana was also built with a statue equal in height to that of three men, and a flight of steps leading to the river, a large number of houses for Brahmans to live in, two big *wapis* with a shrine of Chandika were also constructed.

This was how the great Fifth Temple came into existence. Its remains withstood the shocks of time and survived the attacks of destroyers. Aged, infirm, desecrated, it stood when Sardar Patel rescued it from neglect and

¹ *Veraval Prashasti* of Bhava Brihaspati in the Temple of Bhadrakali.

pledged himself to its reconstruction. As a temple, it had done its work to remind later ages of what India's faith had been; it was left only as a symbol of her to-be-forgotten misfortunes. With the dawn of a new era, the new temple has risen like the phoenix, from its own ashes.

CHAPTER XII

RENOVATION OF TRIPURANTAKA

FOR over a hundred years after the Fifth Temple was built by Bhava Brihaspati in A.D. 1169, Saurashtra continued to be under the Chalukyas and their branch, the Vaghelas of Anahilavada Patan. The land was fast coming to be known as Gurjardesha or Gujarat. Somanatha, under the Pashupata Acharyas, also continued to be the guardian deity of the royal house as also of the people of Gujarat. Prabhasa Patan also continued to be a great entrepot and a sacred place of all-India attraction.

Bhimadeva II, styled Bhola Bhima, came to the throne of Patan in A.D. 1178. During his reign Mu-zz-ud-Din Ghuri invaded Gujarat, but was defeated and retreated to Ghazni with great difficulty.¹

In 1192, however, the heroic Prithviraj, the Chahaman ruler of Delhi, fell in the battle of Taraori. Ghuri won, and North India had the dire experience of total war. In 1197 Kutb-ud-Din Aibak, the slave successor of Mu-zz-ud-Din who had established himself at Delhi, occupied Anahilavada Patan, the capital of Gujarat. But his triumph was shortlived; he had to retire after a few months' occupation.

¹ *The Glory That Was Gurjaradesha*, Pt. III, p. 204.

The Pashupata Acharyas were in charge of the family shrine of the royal Vaghela, Muleshvara, at Mandali in North Gujarat. One Vedagarbharashi was its head during the time of Bhima II, as also of the two temples of Shiva, built by Lunapasaka who was the Governor of Malwa, during the reign of Ajayapala (1137-76).¹

Lunapasaka is the Sanskritised form of *Lunashi*. Looking to the fervour with which Lunashi gave munificent grants to Shiva temples, I am inclined to find in him the original of the 'Lunashi' whose image is carved on a stone on the plinth of the Fifth Temple as worshipping Somanatha with flowers.

Bhimadeva added a *Mcghanada Mandapa* or the *Somesvara Mandapa* to the Fifth Temple. Between 1219 and 1223 Vedagarbharashi appears to have come to Saurashtra and taken charge of the shrines.²

The fortunes of Gujarat declined. Internal dissensions and incessant pressure from the Slave Sultans of Delhi made it weaker with every generation.

The great brothers, Vastupala and Tejapala, then rallied the forces of Gujarat under the leadership of Vishaladeva, a military leader of great capacity. Vishaladeva defeated the king of Malwa and drove back Singhana of Broach, who had invaded Gujarat in A.D. 1247. Thus prays Someshvara, the family priest and poet: "O Lord! I offer you but one prayer—let this Vishaladeva be free from enemies."³

A new age of glory dawned on Gujarat. In 1262 Arjunadeva, Vishaladeva's son, ascended the throne of Gujarat and ruled till 1274. His Veraval grant of A.D. 1264 is unique in every respect.⁴ It states that when Arjuna-

1 *The Glory That Was Gurjaradesha*, Pt. III; p. 212.

2 E.I. II, pp. 439-440.

3 E.I. I. 31, Vs. 113.

4 I.A. XI. 214-215.

deva was reigning victoriously at Anahilapataka and while the Mahamatya Ranaka Maladeva was transacting the business of the seal and Amir-Rukunadina was reigning on the coast of Ilormuja, one ship-owner Noradina Piroja, a native of Iloramujadesha with the blessings of the Pashupatacharya of the shrine of Somanatha, bought a piece of land outside the town of Somanatha and built a *mijigiti* (masjid). For the maintenance of this temple (masjid) he dedicated certain shops and appointed trustees including the Muslim congregations of Nakhuyanaurika (ship-owners), and the wharf people who were devoted to the Martyr and their preacher, and the Muslims among the landholders and the Persian artisans. When the Sultans at Delhi were devastating the country ruthlessly, destroying the holy shrines of the Hindus, the Hindu kings of Gujarat were maintaining the highest tradition of their culture.¹

In the year 1271 are recorded the *Nanaka Prashastis* of Vishaladeva of Gujarat (written some time after the death of the king—one in 1218 V.S. and the other in 1328 V.S.). Poet Nanaka is said to have inaugurated a college for men of learning called 'Sarasvata-Sadas' and a playground for the students called 'Sarasvata-Kridaketana' at Prabhasa, where the Sarasvati falls into the sea. King Vishaladeva stationed him at Somanatha Patan with a grant commissioning him to perform *shraddha* for him.²

The *Cintra Prashasti*, which describes the pilgrimage of Tripurantaka and the renovation of the Fifth Temple by him in A.D. 1287, gives interesting information. Gujarat was considered the homeland of the Lakulisha Pashupatas. Kavyavarohan or Karvan in the Broach district in

¹ *The Glory That Was Gurjaradesha*, Pt. III, p. 221.

² *Important Inscriptions from the Baroda State*, ed. by Gadre, pp. 74-75.

Gujarat claimed the honour of being the place where Bhattaraka Shri Lakulisha was born. He had four pupils—Kaushika, Gargya, Kairusha and Maitreya.

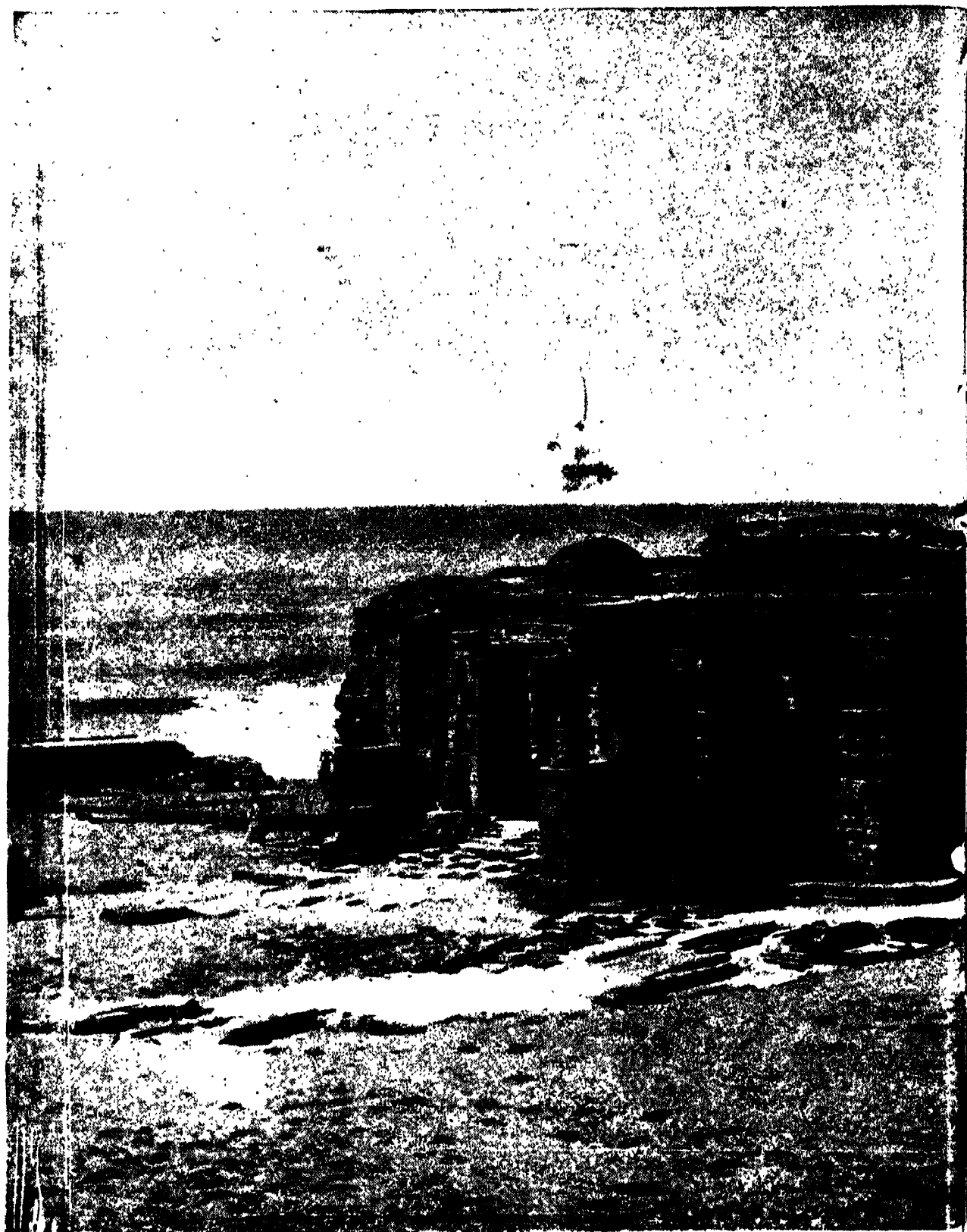
Among the successors of Gargya, the same branch to which Bhava Brihaspati of the Fifth Temple belonged, the ablest was Kartikarashi. He was succeeded by Valmiki-rashi about the 13th century. In his turn he appointed a young ascetic named Tripurantaka, as his successor.

Tripurantaka's pilgrimage was first directed to the Himalayas where he visited Kedarnath, worshipped Shiva there, and had his ceremonial bath at Prayaga at the confluence of the Ganga and the Yamuna. From there he travelled to Shripurvata where he was blessed by the sight of divine Mallinatha. Thereafter he had his bath in the sacred waters of the Reva among the rocks of the Vindhya mountains hallowed by sage Agastya's footsteps.

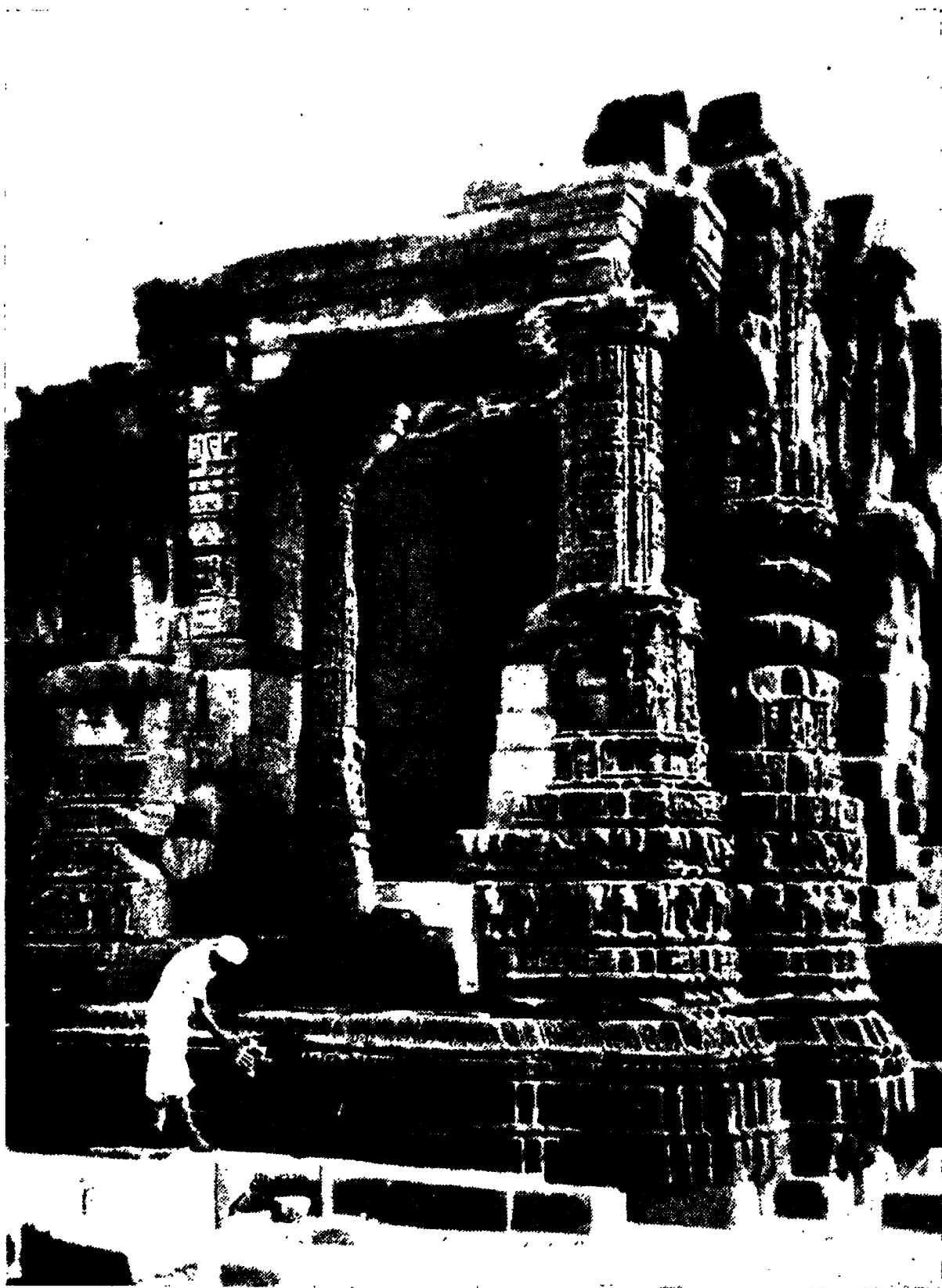
From the Narmada, Tripurantaka turned south to the banks of the Godavari and visited Tryambaka. Continuing his travels southwards, the pilgrim reached Rameshvara. Turning northwards he came to Prabhasa. There he received high honours from the head of the shrine who was styled Bhava Brihaspati—clearly a title of the holder of the office. He was appointed an 'Arya' and the sixth Mahattara.

Tripurantaka was a great builder. He built five temples. A *torana*—a sort of triumphal arch—was also erected as the enclosure, surrounding these temples which were to the north of the *mandapa* near a wondrous old waterlock (*Ghatikalaya*) on the site of an ancient temple.

The first of these temples was built for the welfare of Tripurantaka's mother *Malhana* and the idol was called *Malhaneshvara*. The second was dedicated to *Umapati* in honour of the head of the shrine named Brihaspati, whose wife was Uma. The third called *Umeshvara* was installed



Somanatha: General View showing the main temple as also (to the south-west. The peg lines in



North-West Corner of the temple showing the balconied window of the "Pradakshina Marga."

for the welfare of the lady herself. The remaining two, a *Tripurantakeshvara* and a *Rameshvara* were named after the founder himself and his wife. Five statues in the *antaralas* of the five temples were also dedicated respectively to *Gorakshaka* (Gorakhnath), *Bhairava*, *Anjaneya* (Hanuman), *Sarasvati* and *Siddhi-Vinayaka* (Ganesha).

Tripurantaka also made provision for the service of the temple and also laid down rules regarding the worship.

He got the *Shasana* or grant for the benefit of the temple with his self-acquired money. Fifteen *drammas* were deposited in the treasury of Chaturjataka every month. He also purchased and handed over to it three shops the income whereof was to be spent for the daily offerings of flowers. He also made a grant of land for other miscellaneous expenses and secured aid from merchants for certain festivities.

Tripurantaka was one of the most devout Pashupata acharyas who enriched the shrine. He was also the last.¹

A cataclysm more devastating than Nature's had overtaken distant Delhi.

CHAPTER XIII

DESTRUCTION BY ALLA-UD-DIN KHILJI

By A.D. 1290 a change came over the Sultanate of Delhi. So far it was the military camp of foreign Turks, from where they carried fire and sword to all parts of the country. But conversion and kidnapping of women had brought

¹ E.I. I. pp. 271-287; *The Cintra Prashasti* of Sarangdeva.

into existence an Indian party among the supporters of the Sultanate. This party, headed by the Khiljis under Jalaludin, overthrew the foreign Turks and captured the Sultanate.

In A.D. 1292 Alla-ud-din,¹ a nephew of Jalaludin,² invaded Malwa, captured the town of Bhilsa, plundered the country-side and took a large booty to Delhi. When in Malwa, this ambitious and irrepressible young man heard of Devagiri, then ruled by Ramchandra, the Yadava (A.D. 1271-1304), and of Warangal ruled by Rudramma-devi, the daughter of Ganapati of the Kakatia dynasty, under the title of Rudradeva Maharaja (A.D. 1261-1295). He set out from Delhi in A.D. 1294, marched on Devagiri, plundered the Yadava's dominions and brought back an immense treasure.

By simulating humility he induced his uncle to come to meet him. On his arrival, however, Jalaludin was treacherously killed by Alla-ud-din. The murderer then took over the Sultanate in A.D. 1296.³

A little before this time, Sarangadeva was succeeded on the throne of Gujarat by Karnadeva (A.D. 1294-1304) who, in spite of popular legends, was neither weak nor wicked. Legends that have collected round his name are malicious accretions which failure always brings in its wake. The inscription of A.D. 1293 describes him as 'protecting his people in accordance with the Vedas and the Shastras.'⁴

Karna was new to his kingdom and so was Alla-ud-din. The Sultan, however, was one of the most brutal and unscrupulous rulers known to history. On coming to the

1 *The Glory That Was Gurjaradesha*, pp. 222-224.

2 *History of India*, Wheeler. Vol. IV, Pt. I, p. 51.

3 C.H.I. III. 97.

4 *Buddhi Prakasha* (1910) LVII (March-April), paper on "Muralidhar Temple-Inscription", Vs. 13.

throne, he arrested the Moghul inroads from the north-west and turned his attention to the fertile plains and wealthy ports of Gujarat¹ which had defied Delhi for a century, and ordered Alaf Khan and Nusrat Khan to march against it.

There is a persistent legend that Karna's Mahamatya Madhava, a Nagar Brahman, invited Alla-ud-din to Gujarat. Merutunga, the author of the *Prabandha-chintamani*, and Jinaprabha Suri, the author of the *Tirthakalpatare*, both contemporaries, refer to this incident. The subsequent authorities are unanimous about it.² The *Dharmarajya* composed between A.D. 1300 and 1450 describes how the wicked, graceless, and sinful minister Madhava, the blot on his family and the foe of his country, destroyed the rule of the Kshatriyas and established the rule of the *mlcchchhas*. Whether Madhava betrayed his country to redress a private wrong or for personal benefit is difficult to say.

The reason for this betrayal, first given by the *Kanhadode-prabandha*, was that Madhava wanted to revenge himself on Karna who, enamoured of his brother's wife, had killed the husband and appropriated the wife.³ Though this was accepted by later writers, it sounds too much like the usual legendary way of attributing a personal motive to kings and ministers, and is consistent neither with the character of Karna as disclosed by unimpeachable testimony, nor with the version given by the three earliest authorities. The betrayal of Gujarat by a Brahman of culture and position, however, indicates not only the lack of any consciousness that it was an unforgivable sin to betray one's land to a foreigner but, worse

¹ Elliot III, 163.

² P.C. was written between A.D. 1303-1306.

³ G.L. 103.

still, complete unawareness of what the Turkish conquest involved.

Padmanabha, the author of *Kanhadade-prabandha*, has given a detailed description of the invasion of Gujarat by Alla-ud-din's generals.

Alla-ud-din wanted to bribe the Chahamana Kanhadade of Jhalor to let him pass through his country; he declined the bribe. Samarasimha of Chitore, however, let the army pass through his territory.

Pillaging, burning, destroying, the army of Delhi marched towards Patan. "The Mussalmans, with Madhava at their head, invested the city. The ex-Minister, traitor to the last, advised Karna to escape with his wife. The king takes the advice; the queen flees on foot; and the capital falls into the hands of Alaf Khan, the general of Alla-ud-din. And from what once were temples was sounded the muezzin's call to prayers."

The army then started on a further campaign of destruction to the south. It carried carnage right up to Surat, Rander, and the sea. It returned to Saurashtra, destroyed many of its towns, and proceeded to Prabhasa. The Rajputs mobilised their strength to protect the shrine of Somanatha, and valiantly fought the enemy. But the fortress fell, and in front of the temple, which they had vainly sought to protect, the heroic warriors, after ceremonial bathing and anointment, fell fighting, and surrendered themselves to Somanatha. Madhava, the cause of this evil, was also killed there.¹

The temple fell into the hands of the enemy. Alaf

¹ Jinaprabha Suri, a contemporary, gives the year as V.S. 1356 (A.D. 1300).

Merutunga in *Vichara-Shreni* gives V.S. 1360=A.D. 1304.

Mirat-i-Ahmadi, A.D. 1297 which B.G.I. accepts.

Tazi-Tul Amasir, A.D. 1300.

Tarikh-l-Alai, A.D. 1300.

Khan broke open the shrine, shattered the idol to pieces and carried away the fragments in a cart to Delhi. "We shall make *chunam* out of it," he said.

The poet indignantly asks:

Ah Rudra! Lord!

Thy wrath reduced to ashes

The graceless demons of yore;

Thou did'st then overspread the earth with Dharma;

The power which oppress'd the gods,

Thou did'st shatter.

As the wind bloweth away the chaff

Thou did'st put to flight

The wicked demon Tripura.

Oh Destroyer, I, Padmanabha, ask Thee,

Where is the mighty trident of Thine?

The conquering army, the poet proceeds, burnt villages, devastated the land, plundered people's wealth, took Brahmans, children and women of all castes captive, and flogged them with throngs of raw hide, carried a moving prison with it and converted the prisoners into obsequious Turks.²

Thus ended the Glory that was Gurjaradesha.

CHAPTER XIV

THE SHRINE RISES AGAIN AND AGAIN

Soon after Alla-ud-din's general damaged the temple and broke the idol of Somanatha, the temple was repaired by Mahipala, the Chudasama King of Junagadh. The *Linga*

was installed by his son Khaugar some time between A.D. 1325 and 1351.¹

The fate of Gujarat was, however, in the hands of the Sultans of Delhi. In A.D. 1318 it rebelled, but was crushed by Multani, a general of Delhi.² The Tughlak Sultans of Delhi then appointed one governor of Gujarat after another, all of whom carried fire and sword to every part of Gujarat. The shrine, however, escaped their attention till about 1393 when Zaffarkhan, then Governor of Gujarat, planned an expedition to Somanatha. He is reported to have destroyed the temple.³ This, however, has not been corroborated by other historical chronicles, nor was the temple, in fact, destroyed. The structural evidence of the outlets also establishes that no elaborate repairs were conducted at the end of the 14th century. Zaffarkhan built a mosque in Somanatha, and tried to convert the people to Islam. But the people revolted, and threw off the yoke of the Sultan and became independent.

Delhi's governor of Gujarat became independent in about 1403. Muhammad Shah was the first Sultan. He was, however, put to death by his father Zaffarkhan who stepped in his place as Muzzafar Shah. He, in his turn, was poisoned by his grandson, Ahmed Shah, in or about 1411. Ahmed Shah transferred the capital from Anahilavada Patan to Karnavati which he named Ahmedabad in 1413.⁴

Ahmed Shah took to a rigorous campaign of converting Hindus to Islam. Many petty chiefs, till then independent, accepted Islam and agreed to pay a regular tribute. In 1414, he led his army against the Hindu ruler of

1 Revised Lists of Antiquarian Remains in the Bombay Presidency, 349 and 362.

2 *Bombay Gazetteer*, Vol. XXII, p. 230.

3 *Ibid*, Vol. XXII, p. 233.

4 *Ibid*, Vol. XXII, p. 235.

Junagadh, defeated him in battle, but restored to him his kingdom after he had tendered his submission. Ahmed Shah overran practically the whole of the present-day Gujarat, destroying temples wherever he went. But nothing untoward appears to have happened to the temple of Somanatha.

In 1459 Fatehkhān, the grandson of Ahmed Shah, the founder of Ahmedabad, was placed on the throne of Gujarat at the age of about 13 with the title of Muhammad Shah alias Mahmud Begda. He proved to be a powerful ruler and a great general. In 1467 he attacked the fort of Junagadh and received the submission of Ra Mandlik, the ruler whose name is associated in tradition with Narasimha Mehta, the great saint of Junagadh. But in the following year, Mahmud heard that Mandlik continued to visit the shrine of Somanatha with a golden umbrella and sent an army to Junagadh to humble the Ra's pride. Ra, however, readily submitted and presented the obnoxious umbrella to the Sultan.¹

Mandlik asserted his independence soon after. In 1469 Mahmud Begda marched on Junagadh which, after a siege of two years, surrendered. Ra Mandlik humbly solicited protection from Begda and embraced Islam. Begda removed the *Linga* from the temple of Somanatha and converted it into a mosque. Some of the Muslim accretions seem to have been added at this time.

But the edifice was not used as a mosque for any length of time. Soon after, it appears the level of the temple was raised and the outlet "C" for the sacred water referred to at p. 98 was constructed. It is difficult to say when this took place but it could not be very much later than A.D. 1500. For about 150 or 200 years thereafter,

¹ *Bombay Gazetteer*, Vol. XXII, p. 245.

the worship of Somanatha appears to have continued in the temple.

The Sultanate of Gujarat became decadent very soon. As usual with the Sultanates of that period, palace intrigues, royal murders and internecine warfare characterised it. One of the disappointed generals, in 1572, sought the help of Emperor Akbar who was not slow to respond to this invitation. Akbar marched on Gujarat and annexed it to his empire in 1573. As a result of the statesmanship of this great Moghul, Gujarat saw public order and a strong government for the first time in several centuries. One of Akbar's viceroys appears to have captured the fort of Junagadh in about 1577. The shrine of Somanatha continued to remain unmolested.¹

Up to Begda's destruction of Patan, Prabhasa continued to be famous both for its sanctity and its trade. The shrine attracted pilgrims from all over the country and it was the principal port for commerce with the Middle East. But after Begda's destruction, Prabhasa Patan declined as a port and Surat rose as a great entrepot.

CHAPTER XV

A DESTROYER AND A RESTORER

By 1675² Hindu India was ready to overthrow the intolerable rule of the fanatic Aurangzeb. The South had risen under Shivaji; so had the Shikh Gurus as also many Rajput chiefs in Rajasthan. In 1701, Prince Mohammad Azam, the 39th viceroy of Gujarat, was ordered by Emperor Aurangzeb to destroy the temple of Somanatha

¹ *Bombay Gazetteer*, Vol. XXII, p. 268.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. XXII, p. 286.

‘beyond possibility of repairs.’¹ This despatch refers to a similar order issued at the beginning of Aurangzeb’s reign. Evidently the earlier *Firman* of 1669 had not been carried out, or if carried out, had led to an immediate restoration of the temple.

In the meantime, the Hindu power in the South which Shivaji had founded was forcing its way into Gujarat, then ruled by the Moghul Emperors. As if it was a predestined coincidence, Aurangzeb’s destruction of Somanatha in 1706 coincided with the rise of its avengers. In 1705 Dhanaji Jadhava defeated the Muslim army at the battle of Ratanpur;² the hold of the Moghuls was broken and the Hindu power was knocking at the doors of Saurashtra. As soon as Aurangzeb silenced the temple-bells of Somanatha, the victorious shouts of ‘Har Har Mahadeva’ rent the skies of Saurashtra. Damaji Gaikwad soon began to raid Saurashtra almost annually.³ The temple was no longer used as a mosque or as a shrine, for it was in ruins. Homage was paid to Somanatha in a small temple outside the town which attracted the pilgrims from returning Dwaraka.

Confusion prevailed in Gujarat. Several Hindu chiefs were up in arms against Delhi. The Marathas continued to raid Gujarat, exacting tribute from the Muslim chiefs, and soon became the masters in Gujarat. By 1738 the Maratha incursions into Saurashtra increased. Sher Khan Babi was, at the time, the deputy governor of the Moghul Emperors at Junagadh.

The fortunes of war fluctuated between the viceroys of the Moghul Emperor and the Maratha chiefs. Ultimately in 1753 Ahmedabad was taken by the Marathas,

1 *Bombay Gazetteer*, Vol. XXII, p. 292.

2 *Ibid.* Vol XXII, p. 294.

3 *Ibid.* Vol. XXII, p. 316.

to be recaptured by the viceroys in 1756, and to be lost to the Marathas again in 1759.¹ By 1759 the Hindu conquerors had obtained a complete hold over Saurashtra. In the meantime, the East India Company, which had become a great political power, stepped in to restore order in Saurashtra.

In A.D. 1783, Queen Ahalya Bai of Indore finding the old ruins unfit for installing the deity, built a new temple at a little distance from the old temple. To save it from destruction, the *Linga* was placed in a secret underground shrine immediately below the usual upper one.

The suzerainty of Saurashtra passed into the hands of the Gaekwad of Baroda in about A.D. 1800.

In 1811, Hamid Khan, the Nawab of Junagadh, died and the right of succession to the Gadi of that State was settled by the Gaekwads in favour of Bahadur Khan but the right to control and manage the new shrine of Somanatha was vested in the Gaekwad. In view of the attitude of the Nawabs towards the shrine, it was stipulated that no insult should be offered to Hindu religion in Prabhasa Patan, that no taxes should be levied on the Hindu pilgrims, that 2,000 *koris* should be paid annually by Junagadh for the support of the clerk and to meet the expenses of the temple.

The settlement known as *Kalambandi* was arrived at in 1813. Things went on smoothly till 1820. In that year, however, the sovereignty over Kathiawar was transferred to the British who began to allow the Nawabs of Junagadh to impose restrictions on pilgrims to the shrine.

In 1830, the Nawab of Junagadh levied a tax called 'Chille', a wheel-tax on every cart engaged by pilgrims. The Government of Baroda objected to this levy and the money was refunded to the persons concerned. In 1838, 1841

3 *Bombay Gazetteer*, Vol. XXII, pp. 337 & 344.

and 1865, fresh attempts were made to levy taxes, but they all ended in failure. In 1873, Junagadh State again tried to levy the tax 'Chille' on the ground that it was for the maintenance of roads and the protection of the pilgrims through Girnar, but the claim was rejected by the Political Agent, Kathiawar. A fresh application was submitted by Junagadh and the Political Agent upheld the latter's view that the tax, though in reality a tax on pilgrims, was not abolished by the *Kalambandi* of 1813. Junagadh also levied fees for bathing in the sacred *Kund*. The dispute was placed before the Governor-General who sided with the Nawab of Junagadh and curtailed the power of the Gaekwads.¹

The Baroda Government made representation to the Government of India to reconsider their decision, but the Governor-General-in-Council saw no reason to modify it and informed Baroda that he could not admit of any claim on the part of the Gaekwad to make representations to the British Government on behalf of the Hindu subjects of Junagadh.

The Baroda Government then preferred two separate memorials to the Secretary of State for India in regard to Prabhasa Patan and *Prachi Kund*, but they were also rejected.²

The Hindus of Prabhasa dared not protest against these interferences, and Baroda was technically held not entitled to speak in defence of the shrine which they had the right to manage. Baroda, however, was conceded the right to control and manage the temples.

The conduct of the *pujari* of the temple was a subject of complaint on more than one occasion. Once he was found to take extra fees from worshippers. He was taken

1 *Letters*: No. 9400 dated 2-9-92 and No. 11616 dated 29-10-1891.

2 *Vide* Residency letter No. 8842 dated 11-7-95.

to Kodinar as a prisoner and was released only after he had given a written promise that he would act according to the orders of the Baroda Government.

Junagadh protested against the action of the Baroda authorities and maintained that Baroda had no right to dismiss or punish the *pujari*. On another occasion, the *pujari* stopped the worship altogether. The matter was placed before Junagadh authorities but they said that the Agent of the Baroda Government should file a complaint in a Junagadh court and obtain redress. Later, the Political Agent settled the matter amicably.

CHAPTER XVI

A GREAT RESTORER RISES

As the British established their ascendancy over the country, the rights of the Gaekwads of Baroda over the temple were progressively ignored in favour of the Nawabs of Junagadh. The policy of the Nawabs was to destroy the importance of Prabhasa as a place of Hindu pilgrimage. By political pressure and communal aggressiveness, the Hindus of Prabhasa, Veraval and even Junagadh were slowly cowed down into passive acquiescence in the fate of their beloved shrines.

The Gaekwads could not, and the British would not, interfere, and even the temple of Ahalya Bai began to lose its glamour. Attempts on the part of the Hindus from inside or outside the State to take an interest in the temple or in Dehotsarga were met with communal riots, and were later prohibited in the ostensible plea of maintaining communal peace. Even the Gaekwads were permitted to

repair Ahalya Bai's temple only after protracted negotiations with the Nawabs of Junagadh through the intercession of the Political Agent in Kathiawar.

In December 1922, accompanied by a young man, I went to see the shrine before the dawn broke. At that time, I was passing through an emotional crisis and my imagination was aflame with the past glories of Gujarat. We walked for some time on the sea-shore looking with subdued awe at the majestic ruins of the great temple silhouetted against the starry sky. I remembered our poet Nanalal's verse about Saurashtra where "the sea lashes against its pearly shores". The dawn broke; the aged hoary ruins of this once magnificent temple stood before me.

I went into the temple. On the dusty floor of the *gudhamandapa*, on which once stood the noblest and the mightiest in India, a police sub-inspector had tied a pony!

Since my college days, I had dreamt of the vanished glories of Gujarat. Since 1910, I have dreamt and thought and written about Gujarat—one and indivisible—rising again in its pristine glory. In my first novel in 1915, I had found in 'Jai Somanatha' Gujarat's ancient battle cry. But at the plight of this shrine, I broke down.

With a heavy heart, we then went to Dehotsarga. I knew that for several years, the public of Saurashtra, supported by several influential Hindus all over India, had tried to have the *dharmashala* and the temple at Dehotsarga repaired. Their appeal, however, had been in vain.

I stood on the bank of the Hiranya and gazed at the sacred spot where, centuries ago, the greatest of men, Shri Krishna, had shuffled off His mortal coil. My heart was full of veneration and shame. Millions have worshipped, and worship today, Shri Krishna as 'God Himself'. Thousands, in every generation, had gained prestige or made money in His name or as His representatives on earth. But the nation

had fallen low; none dared to raise his voice to rescue this sacred spot where once His mortal remains had been consigned to flames. I left Dehotsarga with bitter humiliation in my heart.

In 1937, at Pahlgam in Kashmir, I wrote my novel, *Jaya Somanatha*, with my eye 'in fine frenzy rolling.' I saw its grandeur as in A.D. 1024. I saw its ghastly destruction and I visualised its reconstruction under victorious king Bhimadeva. Reconstruction of Somanatha was then but the nebulous dream of a habitual dreamer.

But things were moving fast. In 1942, India, under Gandhiji, embarked upon its final struggle for independence. In 1946, the British decided to quit India; they were not content, however, to leave it as a united country. Partition had to be accepted before they left our shores. By the Independence Act, the country was fragmented and the Indian States let free from the bonds of paramountcy. India was, for all purposes, balkanised. But the compulsion of geography and the collective will of the Indian people were bent on consolidating the country. And this will had its mighty instrument in Sardar Patel, who was to be the great restorer of the shrine.

The Muslim rulers of Indian States had their own dreams. Whatever their people thought, whatever the compulsion of geography, their eyes turned to Pakistan. One of them was the Babi Nawab of Junagadh.

Out of the total population of Junagadh, eighty-two per cent were Hindus. Its territory was not compact; it had several enclaves pertaining to the States which had acceded to India and ultimately integrated into Saurashtra. By religion and culture, the State was Hindu; economically, it was an integral part of Saurashtra. Since time immemorial, Prabhasa, Girnar and Junagadh, the birthplace of saint Narsimha Mehta, were places vene-

rated by Hindus all over the country. Junagadh, again, was the home of Ra Khangar and his queen Ranak Devi—symbols of heroism enshrined in song and story in Western India.

Suddenly the people of Junagadh were shocked to learn that their Nawab had acceded to Pakistan. A mighty wave of indignation swept not only over the people of Junagadh, but on the whole of India.

The Kathiawar Political Conference took up the challenge. The people of Junagadh took the unique and historic step of establishing a parallel Government. The *Arzi Hakumat* or the Provisional Government of Free Junagadh, with Samaldas Gandhi, now one of the Trustees of the Somanatha Trust, at the head, denounced the action of the Nawab in acceding to Pakistan and published a Proclamation, which I had drafted.

DECLARATION BY THE SUBJECTS OF JUNAGADH STATE FORMATION OF PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

WHEREAS the Nawab of Junagadh has, against the declared wishes of an overwhelming majority of his subjects and under the influence of the agents of the Dominion of Pakistan, executed on 15th September 1947 an Instrument of Accession whereby the State is declared to have acceded to the Dominion of Pakistan;

AND WHEREAS the Dominion of Pakistan has accepted the said Instrument of Accession in disregard of such declared wishes and in defiance of all natural ties which bind the people of Junagadh (82% of whom are non-Muslims) to the people of Kathiawar and to the Dominion of India and in breach of the understanding on the basis of which certain parts of India were allowed to secede and form into a separate State of Pakistan; namely that only contiguous areas predominantly inhabited by Muslims were to be included, into the Dominion of Pakistan with the free and willing consent of the people inhabiting those areas;

AND WHEREAS by his said act of executing the Instrument of Accession, the Nawab has purported to transfer the allegiance of the subjects of the State against their will to the Dominion of

Pakistan so as to compel them to be nationals of Pakistan which is a state foreign to them and formed with the object of providing a national home for Muslims;

AND WHEREAS before and after the said purported Accession, the authorities of the State under the guidance of Pakistan, and in the name of the Nawab armed a section of the Muslims of the State with a view to terrorise the subjects of the State and to prevent them from claiming self-determination and voicing their antagonism to the Accession with the result that more than a hundred thousand of the subjects have already left and many more are leaving the State every day and the State authorities are infiltrating the State territories with Muslim refugees;

WE THE SUBJECTS OF JUNAGADH STATE HEREBY DECLARE that by transferring the allegiance of his subjects against their will to Pakistan and preparing for a reign of terror to coerce them to acquiesce in such transfer, the Nawab has forfeited his claim to the allegiance of his subjects;

WE HEREBY FURTHER DECLARE that the Dominion of Pakistan in accepting the said Instrument of Accession of the Nawab has violated the principle of self-determination as also the afore-stated understanding on which Pakistan was agreed to be formed and that therefore the said Instrument of Accession is null and void and not binding on the subjects of the State or the territories thereof;

WE FURTHER DECLARE in exercise of our inherent right of self-determination our decision to accede to the Dominion of India and to join the territories of Junagadh State with the contiguous territories of the Dominion of India;

WE FURTHER DECLARE our firm and solemn resolve to adopt all such means and to take all such steps as may be necessary or incidental to the State of Junagadh formally acceding to the Dominion of India and forming and remaining an integral part thereof:

In furtherance of our said solemn declaration and resolve we hereby appoint a Provisional Government consisting of:

- 1 Samaldas Laxmidas Gandhi,
(President)
- 2 Durlabhji Keshavji Khetani,
- 3 Bhavanishanker A. Oza,
- 4 Suragbhai Kalubhai Varu,

5 Manilal Sunderji Doshi,

6 Narendra Pragji Nathwani,

with all power, authority and jurisdiction heretofore vested in and exercised by the Nawab of Junagadh prior to 15th September 1947, over/and in relation to the said State of Junagadh and all territories thereof and WE HEREBY AUTHORISE our said Provisional Government to take immediate steps for implementing and carrying out our said declaration and resolve and to exercise all power, authority and jurisdiction hereby conferred upon them.

AND WE HEREBY SOLEMNLY pledge our allegiance to the said Provisional Government and through it to the Dominion of India and call upon all the subjects of Junagadh State wherever resident to carry out loyally the orders and directions of the said Provisional Government.

The Provisional Government of Junagadh moved to Saurashtra and took possession of the Junagadh House at Rajkot. Young men from all over Saurashtra flocked to its banner of freedom. Large sums of money flowed in, volunteers were armed and trained. On the Dussehra Day, the 'Day of Victory'—October 24, 1947—the volunteers of the Provisional Government began their operations. People rose against the Nawab's rule in several parts of Junagadh.

Several parts of the State fell into the hands of the Provisional Government. When the Nawab heard of it, he fled to Pakistan with his jewels, his wives and his dogs, (one of his Begums and some Children were left behind in the hurry) leaving Sir Shah Nawaz Bhutto, his Prime Minister, a resident of Pakistan, to run the Government as best as he could. The volunteer-army of freedom advanced rapidly and was welcomed everywhere with enthusiasm.

Bhutto then wrote a letter to Buch, the Regional Commissioner of Saurashtra in the Government of India:

“Dear Mr. Buch,

After discussion with Mr. Samaldas Gandhi at Rajkot on October 1, Capt. Harvey Jones, senior member of Junagadh State Council, brought certain proposals for the consideration of the Council. The Council were prepared to accept them under protest but before a final decision could be communicated to Mr. Samaldas Gandhi it was thought necessary to ascertain the opinion of the leading members of the public. A meeting was therefore held this evening and the view of the leaders was unanimously expressed that instead of handing over the administration to the Indian Union through the so-called Provisional Government, it should be directly given over to the Indian Union, through the Regional Commissioner at Rajkot.

The Junagadh Government, therefore, has requested that in order to avoid bloodshed, hardship, loss of life and property and to preserve the dynasty, you should be approached to give your assistance to the administration particularly with a view to preserve law and order, which is threatened by aggressive elements from outside. This arrangement is sought pending an honourable settlement of the several issues involved in Junagadh's accession. We have already wired to His Excellency Lord Mountbatten, Mahatmaji, Prime and Deputy Prime Ministers of India, Hon'ble Abdul Kalam Azad and the Governor-General and Prime Minister of Pakistan.

I hope you will kindly respond to this request.

Yours sincerely,
Sd/-S. N. Bhutto,
Dewan, Junagadh.”

While Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and myself were sitting in his house at night in Delhi, a telephone message was received from Buch that the Dewan of the Nawab had invited the Indian Army into Junagadh. When he finished the telephone conversation, his face was beaming. He told me what the message was and smiled. My first thought, I expressed in these words: “So it is JAYA SOMANATHA”. Sardar smiled.

Next month, Sardar, accompanied by Jam Saheb and Kakasaheb Gadgil, went to Junagadh on November 12, 1947, the Diwali Day.

Jam Sahab told me his impressions. He accompanied the Sardar to the temple premises. "We then went down the steps to the sea. Sardar then took some water from the sea in his hands. He said to me: 'My ambition is fulfilled'. We silently returned and entered the temple. All his worries were gone and a new light was reflected on Sardar's face."

"We went," writes Kakasaheb "to Junagadh. From Junagadh, we went to Veraval and on Kartik Sud 1st, the New Year Day of Samvat 2004, we visited Somanath.

"We saw the temple. While Sardar and I were having a little walk on the beach, I said to Sardar: 'I think the Government of India ought to re-build this temple.'

"He said: 'Well, go ahead.'

"Then we two and the Jam Sahab came to the temple and there in the presence of about 500 people, I announced: 'Government of India have decided to re-build this temple and instal the deity.

'This Government has come to fulfil and not to destroy. The age of reconstruction is now on.'

"Immediately after this, the Jam Sahab announced a donation of one lakh of rupees. Fifteen minutes later, a huge public meeting was held in the Ahalya Bai Temple where Sardar, in his speech, said:

'ON THIS AUSPICIOUS DAY OF THE NEW YEAR, WE HAVE DECIDED THAT SOMANATHA SHOULD BE RECONSTRUCTED. YOU, PEOPLE OF SAURASHTRA, SHOULD DO YOUR BEST. THIS IS A HOLY TASK IN WHICH ALL SHOULD PARTICIPATE.' "

Jam Sahab gave the first donation of one lakh of rupees for the reconstruction. Samaldas Gandhi representing the Junagadh administration followed with Rs. 51,000.

CHAPTER XVII

AS I SAW IT

IN January of 1948, at the invitation of Samaldas Gandhi, the Gujarati Sahitya Parishad was held at Junagadh under my presidentship. Literary Gujarat had gathered at the native town of her greatest poet Narsi Mehta. My joy knew no bounds. My dream of Gujarat was coming true, and in my lifetime too.

From Junagadh the literary conference made a pilgrimage to Somanatha. Jam Saheb was with us.

When I saw the temple of Somanatha in detail, I stood awe-struck. Some of the old structures—*garbhagriha* (inner shrine), part of *pradakshina marga* (the circumambulatory passage), *antarala* (the intermediate corridor) and the *gudha mandapa* (central hall) with its three domes were all there. The *gudha mandapa* was partly covered by a mosque-like dome.

The pillars were connected by sculptural brackets in lintels, now partly broken. The pillars in the central *ashtansha* (eight-divisioned area) of the *gudha mandapa* stood thirty-five feet apart from each other. Remnants of the *shikhara* (spire) of the temple lay to the west. The sculptured images were found preserved at a few places. There were courses with disfigured images at the place where the *garbhagriha* was connected with the *mandapa*. In the north there were horizontal courses of the *mahapitha* comprising elephants, horses and men. Above it was a course of *kumbha* but in broken condition. Some upper courses were also preserved on the south side. Pillars of the front door, one pillar of the south door and the outward pillars of the *pradakshina marga* were also standing. A part of the floor of the *mandapa* as well as the *garbha-*

griha had been broken up. Outside the *gudha mandapa* was the flooring of the *Meghanada Mandapa* constructed by Bhimadeva II. B.K. Thapar of the Department of Archæology, Government of India, conducted a short but intensive excavation there and brought to light abundant evidence of the material remains of the earlier temples buried below. A few stone slabs with letters carved on them were found during the excavations.

On excavation, some carved stone pieces meant for the *shikhara* of an older temple were also found in the lowermost foundation of the temple. Stones of older temples were also found used in the repairs of the later ones. Certain stones used in the *shikhara* carved on one side were used in the plinth after a fresh carving had been made on the other side. Some steps carved on both sides showed that they were used for different parts of different temples. Some bricks 18 in. \times 12 in. \times 3 in. and 21 in. \times 10.5 in. \times 4 in., yellowish in colour, were found below the *yonipat*, the circular stone base round the *Linga* of Somanatha in the *garbhagriha*. It was difficult to say what these bricks were used for. In the old structure no material to cement the stones appeared to have been used; they were so well set that there was no need for a cementing material. But at places some strong cementing substance was also noticed.

Idols of various gods, animals and birds artistically carved, and carvings of dancing girls exhibiting various poses and emotions, images of men and women with drappings of the tenth and eleventh centuries were also found in the debris lying to the north. The carvings of dancing girls were in the *tribhanga*, *dvibhanga* and *atibhanga* poses; a few of them were carved standing erect. There was also found a stone slab with Brahmi script of the

Valabhi period (6th and 7th century). Names of the craftsmen were carved on almost every stone.

In spite of the passage of eight centuries, the foundation had not sunk at any place. The foundation of the *garbhagriha* when excavated, was found to be laid on sand at a depth of over 13 feet from the outside ground level; the *brahmashila*, however, was placed upon a square masonry going down as deep as the foundations themselves and filled with rubble and stones to prevent it from sinking into the sand.

On both the sides, sand had accumulated round the temple. Its seawall was broken. Lord Curzon had named it an ancient monument; he had got the western wall repaired, and under his order was raised a compound-wall as well. On the north side were a few huts of scavengers. The area to the east was full of recently built houses—most of them found later to have been built on the plinth of the temples. Only the old temple of Ganapati stood intact though the idol was recent.

Centuries of vandalism had left nothing but traces of this great temple to testify to its ancient grandeur.

CHAPTER XVIII

PLANNING: UNIVERSITY OF SANSKRIT

IN the beginning, some persons, more fond of dead stones than live values, pressed the point of view that the ruins of the old temple should be maintained as an ancient monument. We were, however, firm in our view, that the temple of Somanatha was not an ancient monument; it lived in the sentiment of the whole nation and its recon-

struction was a national pledge. Its preservation should not be a mere matter of historical curiosity.

Some of my scholar friends had hard things to say about me for my 'vandalism'. They forgot that I am fond of history, but fonder still of creative values.

When the question was pressed by the Archæological Department, Sardar expressed his views as follows:—

“...The Hindu sentiment in regard to this temple is both strong and widespread. In the present conditions, it is unlikely that, that sentiment will be satisfied by mere restoration of the temple or by prolonging its life. The restoration of the idol would be a point of honour and sentiment with the Hindu public.”

(9-8-1948)

At that stage it was considered that the restoration of the idol would not interfere with the maintenance of the old temple. The specialists, on scrutiny, found that the ruins were salt-eaten and irreparable, nor could they support a new *shikher*. Religious injunctions also stood in the way of installing the deity in ruins which could not be renovated as prescribed. It was, therefore, finally decided to rebuild the temple.

On December 13, 1947, the Standing Committee of the Ministry of Works, Mines and Power of the Government of India approved of the idea and N. V. Gadgil, the Minister in-charge, instructed his Consulting Architect to visit Prabhasa. Though the Government of India sponsored the scheme, Sardar at the suggestion of Gandhiji decided that the Government should not make any contribution in the form of money for the reconstruction of the temple.

On December 25, 1947, the States Ministry decided to request the Junagadh authorities to lease a sufficiently large area around the temple for development on these lines.

On January 23, 1949, a conference was held at Jamnagar attended by Sardar and Shri Gadgil with Jam Saheb, Uchhrangrai Dhebar, Chief Minister of Saurashtra, and Samaldas Gandhi, Administrator of Junagadh. The Trust, it was then decided, was to consist of two representatives of donors, two eminent public men, two representatives of the Government of India, and two representatives of the Government of Saurashtra Union (of whom one would be from Junagadh).

The Board of Trustees were to be assisted by an Advisory Committee the composition of which was to be settled by the Government of India. The objects of the Trust were to include 'not only the rebuilding and the maintenance of the Somanatha Temple itself and its auxiliary institutions, the renovation of Dehotsarga where Lord Shri Krishna parted with His body, but also the general improvement of the neighbourhood so as to restore its atmosphere of sanctity.' I was instructed to prepare the Trust Deed.

My view was that a temple by itself would not be enough in these days of cultural resurgence, nor did the authoritative tradition of a great temple permit its dissociation from a centre of learning. If the temple was to be a real centre of attraction for the country, it should have close association with an All-India Sanskrit University and should also have a suburb where people could come either for health, study or for rest, and a *goshala*. I therefore submitted a note to Sardar regarding a scheme for an All-India Sanskrit University. It ran as follows:—

“There are no less than ten thousand *Pathashalas* in India in which Sanskrit education is imparted according to the old Indian style. These institutions are generally supported by public charity and apart from training students in rituals and other branches of

ancient Indian learning, keep alive Sanskrit as a living force in the country.

“There are a few centres in India holding examinations for the title of *Shastri* and *Acharya*, which are recognised all over India. The principal among them in North India are the Queen’s College, Banaras, and the Sanskrit College, Calcutta. In Western India, as far as I know, the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan is the only institution which confers such academic titles. In the South, there are more than one such institution, Tirupathi being the most prominent. Some of the Universities also confer titles.

“Roughly speaking, Sanskrit education in India today follows two methods:

- (i) the critical and historical method following modern methods of research, which is being adopted by the Universities;
- (ii) the scholastic method now being followed by the *Pathashalas*.

“It is the latter method which makes Sanskrit not a dead classical language like Greek or Latin, but a living language spoken by thousands.

“Several attempts have been made to establish an All-India Sanskrit University which would co-ordinate the methods of Sanskrit education in the country. Some enthusiasts, four years ago, made an attempt at Agra which, however, did not succeed. Babu Sampurnananda is recently trying to convert the Banaras Sanskrit College into a sort of University.

“Nothing tangible, however, so far seems to have been achieved. It is of the highest importance to the country that there should be an All-India institution which, while preserving the best in the old methods followed by the *Pothashalas*, will re-orientate the out-

of-date courses and keep alive the inspiration of Sanskrit and all it stands for in the life and learning of the country. It must not be forgotten that if these institutions are allowed to die, it would not only be a serious and irreparable loss to learning and culture, but will tend to lower the standard of morals and outlook in the whole country. We would, besides, have allowed one strong bulwark against the devastating progress of materialism to crumble. It is, therefore, suggested that there should be an All-India Sanskrit University conducted by the Centre.

“It is suggested that such a University should be at Prabhasa Patan in Saurashtra. Prabhasa, where the temple of Somanatha stands, rose into all-India reputation, as a sacred place, contemporaneously with, if not earlier than, Kashi. In the cultural history of India, the place is doubly sacred. The temple of Somanatha is situated there and a new temple is going to replace the relics of the old one. It is also the place where Lord Shri Krishna left His body wounded by the arrow of a hunter. Once there is a University of Somanatha, its ancient associations will be revived. The shore on which Prabhasa stands in one of the most picturesque places in India. The association of a Sanskrit University with Prabhasa, therefore, will create for India a new cultural centre.

“It must not be forgotten that up to the 13th century, Somanatha was worshipped throughout India as a deity of equal importance with Kashi Vishvanatha. From the 4th or 5th century, it was one of the greatest seats of learning, presided over by the great teachers of the Pashupata cult of Shaivism, which exercised its influence in the whole of India. During the Mughal

period, even Muslim merchants going by the port of Prabhasa used to make offerings at the shrine. It is only a few miles from the port of Veraval and from the Keshod airport. Quite a large number of foreigners are now coming out to India with a view to study its culture. A place where Sanskrit learning is co-ordinated with modern learning will attract attention all over the world.

“The Indian Princes of Saurashtra and Rajasthan have continued to lavish their patronage to the *Pathashalas* in these areas. Almost every little place of importance has a *Pathashala*. In Jaipur, there is a very good Sanskrit College. Jalore, Shrimal and Siddhpur, once seats of learning, have also some remnants of Sanskrit learning. In Gujarat, *Pathashalas* are being slowly eliminated but in Maharashtra there are quite a large number of them. I have no doubt that these *Pathashalas* will come to be affiliated to the University.

“For an All-India Sanskrit University, to start with, we must have fifty lakhs of rupees for non-recurring expenditure and four to five lakhs of rupees per annum for recurring expenditure. The Government of India and the Governments of Saurashtra, Rajasthan, Madhya Bharat and Bombay may be approached to contribute substantially. A mere parochial institution confined to Western India is of no value; to be a world asset, it must be an All-India University. If properly approached, I have no doubt that even other Provincial and State Governments in India will make a substantial grant for this purpose. The Saurashtra Government has already promised to acquire for the Somanatha Temple a very large tract of

land and it will not be difficult to house the University in that area.”

Sardar approved of the idea and it was incorporated in the Trust Deed.

CHAPTER XIX

PREPARATION—ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND THE TRUST

ON February 15, 1949, the State Ministry issued a directive that it was no longer necessary for the temple or any land in Prabhas Patan to vest in the Government of India. The temple and the land which were then in the jurisdiction of the Saurashtra Government (Junagadh having merged in the meantime) and such property rights as were considered necessary for the proper fulfilment of the Trust, would later vest in the Trustees.

The draft Trust Deed, which required considerable amendments, was directed to be sent back to me. The objects were specified in the direction as not merely to restore and reconstruct the temple and the idol, but to improve the surroundings and set up such institutions as may restore the sanctity of Prabhasa Patan and its surroundings. This was to include the construction of rest houses for the pilgrims and setting up of educational institutions for Sanskrit. The Trust was also to attend to the restoration of places like Dehotsarga—the place where Shri Krishna cast off His body. It was also directed that the Government of India as such would not finance the reconstruction, but could have representation on the Trust.

Soon after, I prepared the draft Trust Deed.

The Advisory Committee appointed by the Government of India consisted of C. M. Master, Architect; J. C.

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Ghosh; Prabhashankar O. Sompura, one of the hereditary architects of Somanatha; U. J. Bhatt, Chief Engineer of Saurashtra Government; B. S. Vyas; G. B. Deolalikar, Consulting Architect of the Central P.W.D.; S. K. Joglekar, Town Planning Officer of the C.P.W.D.; with myself as Chairman and N. P. Chakravarti, then Director-General of Archaeology, as Convenor. We started working on July 30, 1949. Under our instructions, Prabhashankar Sompura, with his wide knowledge of the ancient art of temple building, prepared a plan of the new temple on the style of the old one.

On October 18, 1949, Sardar nominated the first Trustees.

Jam Saheb and Samaldas Gandhi were to represent Saurashtra Government. Gadgil, Minister for Works, Mines and Power, and D. V. Rege, Regional Commissioner of Saurashtra at Rajkot, were appointed as nominees of the Government of India. Brijmohan Birla and myself were appointed as representatives of the general public. Two vacancies were kept for future donors. Though not officially a Trustee, U. N. Dhebar, Chief Minister of Saurashtra, has been more than a Trustee, aiding, guiding and implementing all the activities of the Trust with rare conscientiousness.

Sardar's message to Jam Saheb of Nawanagar, which was conveyed in a D. O. letter, dated November 22, 1949, from V. P. Menon, then Secretary, States Ministry, is as follows:—

“Your Highness will recollect that you handed over to me a cheque for Rs. 1,00,000 (One lakh) some time ago which I returned to you. I am now writing to suggest that this amount may be paid as a donation to the Somanatha Fund. Somanatha is an ancient heritage of ours, and we have to take every care to

see that the temple and its environments are maintained in a manner worthy of their ancient traditions. For this purpose, we propose to constitute a Trust. Your Highness will remember that Sardar made an appeal for funds for the Somanatha Trust some time ago. The object, therefore, is one which deserves full support from all patriotic Indians and that is why I am making this suggestion. I shall be grateful for a line in reply.”

By the end of 1949, about Rs. 25 lakhs were collected. The Trust Deed was finally approved by the Government of India and Saurashtra Government and was executed on March 15, 1950.

The objects of the Trust were thus fully defined :

- “(a) Upon trust to restore and reconstruct the said Temple of Somanatha in such manner as **may** be determined in consultation with an ‘Advisory Committee’ to be constituted as hereinafter provided and to incur the necessary expenses in connection therewith ;
- (b) Upon trust to instal or cause to be installed in the Temple of Somanatha one or more idols of Shiva and other deities as are objects of worship by the Hindu community ;
- (c) Upon trust to hold rituals, ceremonies and celebrations, necessary for or connected with or incidental to the shrine of the deity referred to in clauses (a) and (b) ;
- (d) Upon trust to allow all members of the Hindu community without distinction of caste, creed or sect to use the said Temple of Somanatha as a place of worship and for offering prayers and performing rites and ceremonies in accordance with the regulations that may be made in that

behalf and for such other religious or charitable purposes as the Trustees may, from time to time, sanction but subject always to any provisions contained in such regulations as the Trustees may consider necessary to secure the safety and protection of the building;

- (e) Upon trust to construct and maintain rest houses and *dharmashalas* for the pilgrims visiting the said Temple of Somanatha;
- (f) Upon trust to set up one or more institutions, including a University, which has for its objects the imparting of education, the essential features of which are—
 - (i) the religious education of Hindus,
 - (ii) the imparting of knowledge of Sanskrit,
 - (iii) the study of or research in Sanskrit learning, Indology or any branch of knowledge of which such knowledge or Indology forms part, and
 - (iv) the spread of Sanskrit or Sanskrit learning or to popularise Hindu scriptures or to get prepared or publish works which have for their object the spread of Sanskrit, Sanskrit learning or Indology or which would impart such education to the general public;
- (g) Upon trust renovate, reconstruct and maintain Dehotsarga, the sacred place where Lord Shri Krishna departed from the world and to construct a shrine and a suitable memorial thereon;
- (h) Upon trust to allow non-Hindu visitors to visit the Somanatha Temple and have *darshana* of the deities in accordance with the rules and regulations that may, from time to time, be fram-

ed by the Trustees provided that no such visitor shall be allowed personally to perform worship in the said Temple of Somanatha;

- (i) Upon trust to improve, beautify, and maintain the land, premises and area leading to or in the neighbourhood of the said Temple of Somanatha and to do such things as may add beauty, solemnity and sanctity to the aforesaid Trust properties;
 - (j) Upon trust to take over, maintain and conduct the temples, shrines and sacred places situated on the Somanatha Estate or any other place;
 - (k) Upon trust to manage and develop the Somanatha Estate or any part thereof in such manner as the Trustees may deem fit including setting up buildings or agricultural farms or other schemes not repugnant to the principal objects contained in clauses (a) to (h) hereof;
 - (l) Upon trust to maintain and develop *goshalas* for developing good breed of cows and other cattle and a farm or farms for the same;
 - (m) Upon trust to take over, maintain, conduct and manage other public Trusts of a religious or charitable nature which have as their objects the maintenance, upkeep or conduct of any Hindu temple, shrine or sacred place, of the setting up, maintenance or conduct of any institution, one of the features of which is the object specified in clauses (f) and (k) thereof;
 - (n) Upon trust to do all things necessary, germane or incidental to the aforesaid objects."
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CHAPTER XX

DEHOTSARGA

ON July 3, 1950, I went to Dehotsarga to plant a tree in celebration of the first All-India *Vana Mahotsava*. The words I uttered on that occasion are the only ones in which I can give an adequate idea of my impressions:—

“I am overwhelmed with emotion in planting this tree at Dehotsarga, at the spot where Shri Krishna ‘shuffled off His mortal coil’. These few feet of earth are the holiest in the wide world, for here He reclined, in the last few moments of his earthly existence. The cow and the tree—He was styled ‘*Gosakha*’, the cow’s companion—were His companions too. Vrindavan is His forest. Giri Puja is His cult. Both in Govardhana near Mathura and Raivataka here, He worshipped the hills and their forests. He brought the *Parijata* and the *Vaijayanti Tulsi* and planted them here. He is the guardian deity of the *Vana Mahotsava*; and so we meet to offer Him homage.

“This spot awakens wonderful memories of Prabhava Tirtha. I see before me Balarama, his hands on the shoulders of his wives, enjoying the voluptuous touch of the breezes flowing from the Western Sea. I see Dharmaraja, the eldest of the Pandavas, coming here on a pilgrimage to the Shrine of Somanatha. I see here the stolen glances of Subhadra as she lovingly fastened her gaze on Arjuna walking hand in hand with Shri Krishna on this very bank of Hiranya. More somberly I see here the fratricidal war of the Yadavas who, in the plenitude of their power, massacred each other. At Bhalaka Tirtha I see the Lord Himself sleeping under a tree. I see the hunter’s arrow speed-

ing. It enters His feet; He awakens with a shudder: He smiles with superhuman understanding, for His work on earth is done. It is time for men to live for ever on His inspiration.

“He has left behind Him unfading memories; of the divine Child on whom everyone doted; of the loyal Friend who never forsook those who came to Him with self-surrender; of the fascinating Lover who could love and be loved with undying ardour; of the Rebel who led His people out of bondage; the Yogeshvara who in an age of conflicts and rivalries could rise to such a stature that men saw in Him, not only their chief, but the embodiment of Indian unity, not merely the World Teacher who stood for Moral Order, but ‘God Himself’.

“He was great in life; not merely great,—His personality was harmonious, perfect, beautiful. More than three thousand years have passed by and yet He lives in our hearts as no man ever has. No mother can think of the wonderful child except in terms of ‘Balagopal’. No one can sing or dance except in His Name and to the memory of His Rasa. No teacher ever taught the Truths He did. No higher secret was given to men than what He gave, by which, man, weak as he is, can become merged in Him in this very life. The message which He gave in the *Bhagavad Gita* is the message of Life Eternal. From Arjuna to Mahatma Gandhi, Indians, great and small, found life’s fulfilment in living up to this message, in becoming His instrument—*Nimittamatra*. No human being can realise himself and be true to himself in the highest measure without becoming His instrument in life.

“I came to this spot 27 years ago. It was then lying bleak and forlorn. In the early light of the

dawn, it tore my heart to see this spot neglected by ungrateful posterity. His Will, however, was supreme. India became free. The leaders of Free India decided to invest this spot with a dignity and beauty which its sacred associations deserve. I can only thank Him for giving me the opportunity to see this day. In all humility I thank Him for giving me an occasion to pay my humble tribute by planting this tree at the place where He spent the last moments of His mortal

CHAPTER XXI

SOMANATHA—THE SHRINE ETERNAL

His Highness the Jam Sahib laid the foundation stone of the Seventh Temple on May 8, 1950. A silver *Nandi* was consecrated and with its aid I performed on October 19, 1950, the ceremony of pulling down the Fifth Temple, which, hoary and in ruins, was awaiting the day of the shrine's resurrection.

Somanatha was the shrine beloved of India. It was not merely the shrine of the Hindus; pilgrims of other faiths are referred to in old chronicles as visiting it. In its worship she found ancient glory and unending inspiration. In maintaining it with magnificence, she felt a throbbing zeal to maintain the core of her faith, tradition, and collective greatness. An ancient race subconsciously felt that it was Somanatha which connected it with the past and the present; it was the eternal symbol of its faith in itself and its future. As often as the shrine was destroyed,

the urge to restore it sprang up more vividly in its heart.

That is why Somanatha, as a *Jyotirlinga*, has been given a premier place in religious literature for ages. That is why from Mahabharata downwards, the *Pauranic* literature has referred to Prabhasa with a reverence not shown to any other sacred place. That is why for a thousand years Mahmud's destruction of the shrine has been burnt into the Collective Sub-conscious of the race as an unforgettable national disaster.

Perhaps, that is why, in my college days, my imagination turned to the shrine that was no more, with pride and grief, in my articles *Grave of Vanished Empires* and the *Conquest of Somanatha*; and my mind turned to the history of ancient Gujarat for writing romances, when I adopted "*Jaya Somanath*" the national cry of Gujarat, as a symbol of her inspiration for future greatness. That was why in 1947, writing my novel in Kashmir, my imagination lived in the drama of Mahamud's march to Somanatha.

Then I saw the grandeur that was the temple; its endless pilgrims; its valiant defenders; Ganga Sarvajna, the Pashupatacharya, combining in himself spiritual inspiration and wordly wisdom, who died in front of the *Linga* before it was shattered to pieces; the brave Bhima of the twanging bow who harassed the retreating army of the Turk and restored the temple. Then I saw Chowla, the great-grand-mother of Emperor Kumarapala, the restorer of the Fifth Temple, a dancing girl, self-wedded to her mighty Lord but married in flesh to Bhima in a moment of illusory emotion, and I also saw this beautiful, spotless woman giving up her life before Somanatha in her final ecstatic dance of surrender.

It was perhaps a symbolic projection of the unexpress-

ed wish of myriads of hearts of all generations who yearned for Somanatha's resurrection.

This national urge was reflected when Sardar, with uncanny insight, saw that we would never genuinely feel that freedom had come, nor develop faith in our future, unless Somanatha was restored.

PART II

ROMANCE IN STONE

THIS HOARY TEMPLE had once attracted the devotion of the whole of India; for centuries it had been the greatest seat of Pashupata Shaivism, the most powerful cult in medieval India. When I saw it in 1950, it was a solitary, ancient ruin forgotten by the country except in song and story, standing on the very brink of the sea which had once seen the mighty trading vessels of Gujarat carrying our products to foreign lands and returning laden with untold wealth. These ruins had a romance of their own. They were a living monument of all that India stood for, when it was free, and all it suffered when it lost its freedom. I was fascinated by the temple's romance, and from each stone I tried to gather its unfathomed mystery.

CHAPTER I

THE DAYS OF AURANGZEB

THE romance ran backwards. Aurangzeb, the fanatic, was the last ruler in whose reign this temple saw the worship of Somanatha. In 1706 it was converted into a mosque. In the same year the Marathas entered Saurashtra. *Mirat-i-Ahmedi* (1760) attests to this conversion, but when the author wrote his chronicle it had gone out of use. Was it too old for use? Was it superstition? For in 1922 I found a belief among the Muslims of the town that no one could use the stones of this temple and escape misfortune.

In 1713 the Marathas conquered Saurashtra—Kathiawar as it was called. In 1783, Ahalya Bai, the devout queen, found the ruins beyond repairs and installed Somanatha in a new temple a little away from the old site. Somanatha still continues to be worshipped in the temple which she built.

When the temple was converted into a mosque, two mosque domes were constructed one over the *gudha mandapa* and the other over the *garbhagriha*. The old Chalukyan pillars supporting the dome over the *gudha mandapa* were converted into arches by crude artistic stone structures. The *pradakshina marga* or the circumambulatory passage to the west was removed; its stones remained piled up on the plinth of the temple of Parvati. The external face of the western wall of the *garbhagriha* was walled up, possibly to support the mosque dome. Its inside wall, however, remained unchanged. Its floor remained uncared for; possibly it had been broken up by repeated hunt for treasures; Muslim chroniclers of Mahmud Ghazni's raid had left too picturesque an account of the hidden treasure; and the destroyer could not resist the

temptation to search for it. I was avaricious too. I wanted to strike on one little coin or a fugitive copper plate which could shed light on the romance of this temple. But I was unlucky.

Which part of this reconstruction can be traced to Aurangzeb's time, 1706, and which of it to its earlier conversion into a mosque, it is difficult to say. The latest construction of 1706, it was clear, consisted of a foot thick layer of white stones roughly placed on the old flooring and thus forming a new flooring: part of it was found intact in the north-east corner.

This last reconstruction was a patch-work. How long it was used as a mosque after 1706 no one could say, but it was not for more than a few years. One fact, however, was certain. The edifice was used not as a mosque but as a temple before 1706. That is clear from the statement of *Mirati-i-Ahmadi*.

We also found that the next earlier repairs to the temple, among other things, consisted of fixing reddish yellow stones at odd places. Some of the older stones which were either black, white or reddish had disappeared; these yellow stones were fixed in their places. One such stone was found on the left side of the *chandrashila*; the other, in one of the steps of the northern side of the *gudha mandapa*; the third, to the left of the main entrance in the east. The first of these stones near the *chandrashila* bore an inscription of Samvat 1647.

The fixing of the reddish yellow stones must have been in or before A.D. 1590. The edifice was then used as a temple. The ancient temple, partly dilapidated, was in 1706, still a shrine of Somanatha. It was then that the white stone flooring was fixed at places and the *pradakshina marga* destroyed.

It is more than likely that the mosque domes and

minarets were of an early age when the temple was not so dilapidated and the destroyer was a ruler himself, and not merely the viceroy of a distant ruler whose hold over the territory was crumbling, as Aurangzeb's was in 1706.

CHAPTER II

THE MYSTERY OF THE TWO OUTLETS: THE FIRST TEMPLE

Going backwards in the order of events: when was the temple renovated prior to 1590, the year carved on the dark yellow stone? This renovation was elaborate, but made by some one whose means were limited. It comprised several constructions. The *garbhagriha* door-sill was raised by adding two risers and two treads. A door, smaller both in height and width, was fixed on the door-sill. The original *chandrashila* in beautiful black granite was still seen spreading out under the risers. Possibly the old door with the sill had been broken down to make it look like a mosque.

A new *Linga* was installed at the time of this renovation at a level higher than that of the older *Linga*. This was done by carrying out certain definite changes. A smaller *brahmashila* was placed on the top of the original *brahmashila*, thus raising the base of the *Linga*. The level of the *yonipata* was raised involving the boring of an outlet in the north wall of the *garbhagriha* for the sacred water. The door level was raised in proportion to the height of the *Linga*.

'When was this renovation made', was the question I asked myself. Who made it? In 1459 Mahmud Begda desecrated the temple and converted it into a mosque for the first time. How long was this building used as a temple

between 1459 and 1706; when was it again converted into a mosque? Another question of far greater importance rose before me. I, with several students of Gujarat history, had assumed till then that the ruins were of the edifice stated to have been built by Bhimadeva between 1030 and 1050 after Mahmud Ghazni's raid. If the edifice was of 1030, was this renovation comprising the higher level of the *Linga* made by Kumarapala in 1169?

I went into the *garbhagriha* for the first time in July 1950. I then noticed in its northern wall two outlets (C & B) for the sacred waters, one on top of the other. The excavation also showed two *brahmashilas* one on the top of the other corresponding to the levels of the outlets. Outlet C became necessary because the *Linga* was placed, not on the original *brahmashila*, but on another *brahmashila* on the top of it. The situation was intriguing. These outlets were the keys to open the guarded secret of this temple.

On the spot I drew a rough sketch of the position of the two *brahmashilas* and the two outlets as also their relation to the raised level of the door of the *garbhagriha*. I then formed a hypothesis and later asked Mr. Thapar to carry on excavations and to put this to test. As a result, below outlet B, we found another outlet A. Careful scrutiny yielded valuable results. Right down below the stone structure was the sandy ground in the middle of which stood *brahmashila* A. This was placed on a hollow stone structure filled with rubble and stone. The four walls of the *garbhagriha* descended downwards for about fourteen feet right up to the sand which was roughly five feet above the sea level. The lower portions of these walls were loosely built of Kanjur stones without any mortar pointing or proper facing. Around these, many carved pieces of stone were also found. A broken *shikhar* piece was found right at the bottom of the foundations on the west. A channel—a *yonipata*—carved

in stone was also found at almost the same level on the north of the *garbhagriha*.

Corresponding to the level, in one of the cuttings across the *Mandapa* on the south was found another stone carved into a *yonipata*. Pottery of the early centuries of the Christian era was found in the lower levels of the cutting. Undoubtedly, therefore, the First Temple stood on this spot. Its carved stones were used in the lowermost foundation in building the Second temple. The channel was small and thin. The *shikhara* stone was small. This temple was not, therefore, very large and was built in the same period to which the pottery belonged, that is, the first or second century of the Christian era.

CHAPTER III

THE SECOND, THIRD AND FOURTH TEMPLES

IN the north-east corner was found a stone inscription in Brahmi *lipi* of the Valabhi period (550-700); it was rather large. It is difficult to connect it with the First Temple it cannot be related to the Third Temple which cannot be dated much earlier than A.D. 800. Over the structure of loose rough stones were walls of Kanjur stones pointed with lime. Over this plinth of Kanjur stones was built the plinth of thin-grained reddish sand-stone of which only two courses of a total height of 2½ feet were found; outlet A is in this red stone wall. The *brahmashila* A clearly belonged to the red-stone temple. The question was, did the Kanjur stone structure constitute the relics of an independent Second Temple or was it merely a structure supporting the red-stone temple? Mr. Thapar has come to the conclusion that the Kanjur stone structure was the foundation of

red-stone temple, that is the Third Temple, and not the relics of an independent Second Temple.

But on this hypothesis certain facts remain inexplicable.

The Kanjur masonry at some places was not mere fillings. At a corresponding level to this Kanjur wall, there was a floor-level in the *sabhamandapa* built of the same stone.

On the south, about 20 feet away from the outside face of the Third Temple, was a retaining wall of the same kind of Kanjur stone six feet high on ten feet wide base. This wall was prior in date to the wall of the Third Temple for, as stated by Mr. Thapar, some of the stones near the foundation of the Third Temple were clearly overriding the Kanjur stones. He himself agrees that this was the wall of pre-Phase I structure. Again below the red stone plinth of the Third Temple was found a Kanjur flooring outstretching the limits of the Third Temple flooring.

The Kanjur stone retaining wall running parallel to the length of the temple in the south was also traced further east. The width of the sea-wall was evidently enlarged when the red-stone structure was built. The defaced inscription could not be related to the period of the red-stone temple, but to an earlier one, though later than the First Temple.

Clearly, therefore, there was a very large temple-structure of Kanjur stones on the ruins of which was constructed the Third Temple.

The red-stone Third Temple was a distinctive structure of large dimensions. We found the retaining wall of this temple. On the southern side of the temple, the sloping level of the imbedded stones showed that the temple-wall had fallen. Its entrance steps had been broken by violence. There are traces also of some stones having been

burnt. Violent hands had been laid on the Third Temple; parts of it had fallen, some broken, others burnt. This, therefore, was the temple which Mahmud Ghazni demolished.

This conclusion, supported later on by further excavations, proved beyond any shadow of doubt that the ruins as they stood in 1950 were not of the temple built by Bhoja and Bhima after Mahmud's raid, but of the structure later built by Bhava Brihaspati during the days of Kumarapala in A.D. 1169. The theory that the temple destroyed by Mahmud was on another site, is totally disproved. So also it was clear from the plinth, the flooring, the fallen wall and the base of the pillars that the structure was not of wood, but of stone. There may be a row of wooden pillars outside the *mandapa*. For the Fourth Temple, the *sabhamandapa* was extended in the front; additional steps were constructed concealing the broken steps of the Third Temple; a new *pradakshina marga* was constructed. On the southern face of the plinth we found the carving of an artistic Shiva Tripurantaka piercing Tripura with his spear. The seawall on the south was changed to a mere revetment. In the *sabhamandapa* new pillars were erected with octagonal pedestals, six of which could be traced. The level of the *garbhagriha* was raised, and the second lower outlet B was constructed. Perhaps the original *brahmashila* which, in part, bore marks of violence was kept where it was and a bigger *linga* to suit the height of the *garbhagriha* was installed.

CHAPTER IV

THE FIFTH TEMPLE

ON the plinth of the Fourth Temple, the Fifth Temple was erected. This was the edifice which we got demolished.

The older plinth of the Fourth Temple, the *sabhamandapa*, *garbhagriha* and the *pradakshina marga* were enlarged. The *garbhagriha* and the *sabhamandapa* were not placed in a rectangle as in Temples III and IV, but diagonally. The old pillars of the Hindu type of the *gudha mandapa* were also constructed at this time. The steps were also raised and enlarged. The second protective sea-wall which we found was constructed to the south.

The flooring of the *garbhagriha* and part of the *gudha mandapa* were fixed with black basalt. In the *garbhagriha*, however, the flooring of black basalt was found with two pieces cut as semi-circle on each side to enclose the *Linga*, proving conclusively that the old *Linga* was not replaced. The *chandrashila* in black basalt now shown under the door sill of the *garbhagriha* was also placed at that time. This edifice was of the type of *meruprasada*. As referred to in the inscription, the sea wall erected has been found; so also a plinth of the *Pattashalika* and two of the small temples. Looking to the type of the building, the *Shikhara* must have been at least nine storeys high. Further additions to the structure included the *Meghanada Mandapa* by Bhimadeva II in A.D. 1216.

The excavations carried out both inside and outside the temple clearly proved that this was the temple constructed by Ganda Brihaspati in the time of Kumarapala in 1169 and referred to in the Bhadrakali inscription.

In front of the *mandapas*, there was a wide open space with an entrance door and *kirtistambhas*. Its *sankhadwara* can still be seen. Some of the *kirtistambhas* were also found. From the way it was built, it is clear that there were porches with beautifully carved *toranas* in front of the *mandapas*. The *gudha mandapa* must have had four domes; the *nritya mandapa*, three, built with white local stone, which was found at a distance of three miles from Somanatha and

is non-corrosive. It is hard; carving on it cannot be very plentiful; but it resists the effect of the salt air. It is said that this stone can be shaped easily when just recovered from the mine, but gets harder later. On the outer walls of the temple was used the white lime stone found in mines near about Somanatha, viz. Chandkhatal mine, Gaddar and Somani mines. This stone lends itself to elaborate carving and artistic designs and was used for the outer walls where we find horizontal courses of beautifully carved figures. Black basalt blocks of the size of $18 \times 12 \times 8$ inches and $56 \times 21 \times 4$ were used for the *galbhagriha* flooring. For the *Yonipatta sankhadwara* and the *chandrashila*, the same type of stone was employed. No cement was used in the masonry. The stones were so well set that there was no need for cementing material. But some strong cementing substance appeared to have been used round the *Linga* in the *garbhagriha*. The reconstruction of this temple was made by Prabhashankar Sompura.

It was this temple, strong and solid, which survived all these years. The foundations were not filled with rough pebbles but large stones were set against each other with dovetail joints.

Temple III, therefore, was the one destroyed by Mahmud Ghazni. The Fourth Temple was constructed by Bhoja and Bhima. It was then that the outlet B had to be made as the level of the *Linga* was raised. When were the different temples built? How long were they used as a shrine? These questions are answered by the outlets. Outlet B was used for the longest period of time. The aperture has been rounded at places by the constant flow of water. When I first examined it, I found that the base of the outlet B had been repaired by a piece of black basalt of the type used for the floor of the *garbhagriha* and the *chandrashila*. Outlet B, therefore, had two stages: (a) as origi-

nally constructed, and (b) when a fresh piece of black basalt was inserted in 1169. This establishes that the outlet B was made when the Fourth Temple was built.

Outlet A was also used for a long time. But the configuration of the aperture clearly indicates that it was in use for a shorter period than outlet B. Aperture C, on the other hand, was used for a still shorter period. Outlet B was constructed about A.D. 1030; outlet C went out of use completely by about 1706, when the temple was converted into a mosque. The last record of reconstruction was after Mahmud Begda's demolition of the temple in about A.D. 1500. So outlet C can be taken to have been used for about 200 years.

As regards outlet B, it was first built in A.D. 1030-42 and was repaired in 1169. It remained in use at least up to 1299, till the destruction of the temple by Alaf Khan, the general of Alla-ud-din Khilji. C could not have been put up immediately after 1299, for if it was, it would have been in use for 400 years, that is, for a period of time very much longer than the use of outlet B. But we have clearer evidence to the effect that the raising of the level of the temple, the door-sill and the *garbhagriha* and the construction of the sill took place when the temple was restored after Mahmud Begda's demolition in 1469. Outlet C was therefore in use for about 200 years, and B was used except for small intervals between 1030 and 1459. This would show that aperture A, which went out of use in 1026, must have been in use at least for about 300 years. That would take the construction of the Third Temple at least to the end of the 8th century or the beginning of the 9th century.

Those were the days when the Chalukyas ruled Saurashtra as the feudatories of the Gurjareswaras of the Pratihara line ruling at Kanauj. Temple II of Kanjur

stones therefore must have been constructed during the Valabhi period. The Brahmi inscription, therefore, is to be related to this temple.

There also exists ceramic evidence. Pottery found in the lower levels of the trenches is ascribable to the early centuries of the Christian era. Lakulisha, the founder of the Pashupata cult, also flourished in the second century. The First Temple must be taken to pertain to the first-second centuries of the Christian Era, and its relics form the traces of one of the earliest temples in stone in India. Here was the romance in stone, stretching out to 2,000 years and unfolding a unique story of devotion and heroism, of vandalism and desecration, of defeat and triumph, of the best and worst in man epitomised in a single symbol.

PART III
THE TEMPLE OF SOMANATHA:
HISTORY BY EXCAVATIONS

THE STORY OF SOMANATHA is known to us in considerable detail. It signifies the faith and reverence of the devout Hindu; it symbolises the racial instinct for survival; it amplifies the theory of creation, destruction and reconstruction and above all it represents the architectural development in Gujarat for over 900 years. A huge literature of fanciful stories developed soon after the victory of Sultan Mahmud whom it intended to glorify by extolling his real or supposed virtues. But there are many gaps and incongruities. The picture has hitherto been both incomplete and synthetic. Excavations alone could provide material evidence and add precision to our knowledge.

Excavators seldom worry for the material remains of the mediaeval period. But the shrine of Somanatha did not merely attract attention but was crying for it. The Hon'ble Shri K. M. Munshi as Chairman of the Advisory Committee of the Somanatha Board of Trustees very rightly moved for excavations which were undertaken under the direct guidance of the Department of Archaeology during the months of September-October, 1950, within a stiff schedule of a month and a half immediately before the demolition of the temple. The excavations are quite important, of course, for their own sake. They have settled many problems and have also provided much new information on the size and nature of the earlier temples buried below. They have fully demonstrated what results archaeological methods can bring about when directed against a site for which there exists an abundance of historical material.

B. K. THAPAR

1. TOPOGRAPHY

The town of Somanatha-pattan locally known as Patan ($20^{\circ}-53'$ north lat. and $70^{\circ}-24'$ east long.) is situated on the south-western coast of Saurashtra in the traditional Prabhāsa Kshetra—a place where the Yadavas are supposed to have fallen out amongst themselves and perished. About two miles further east, the three rivers—Saraswati, Hiranya and Kapila—before joining the sea, unite to form the *Triveni*, held unusually sacred as the scene of the cremation of the body of Lord Krishna—*Dehotsarga*. Nearly a mile to the north-west is the famous *Bhalaka Tirtha* the traditional spot of Lord Krishna's death-apotheosis. Much farther inland rises the Gir range of hills or the Raivataka mountains of the *Mahabharata* fame. The town proper is approached by a sufficiently good road from Veraval (upward of two miles only), a railway station on the Rajkot-Veraval line. The celebrated temple, which enshrines in itself one of the twelve pre-eminent *jyotir-lingas*, stands towards the south-western corner of the town on the seashore from which it is separated by a heavily-built retaining wall.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The origin of the temple of Somanatha is shrouded in obscurity; nor is its history complete as revealed by legends and traditions. Its location in and association with Prabhāsa have, no doubt, besides imparting some celebrity, contributed towards its antiquity, it thus literally being the abode of the "Lord of the Moon." But whatever its origin, the stable element in its story is the strong determination on the part of the local populace to keep the temple alive and to restore its glory even in the face of devastating raids which had become more or less regular

after the great expedition led against it by Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni in A.D. 1026. The result was that after each invasion some reconstruction or rehabilitation in the structure was inevitable.

The earliest historical reference to the temple does not lead us much beyond the 10th century A.D. Moolraj (A.D. 942-997), the Solanki ruler of Anhilawada-Pattan, had paid a visit to Somanatha and had also worshipped there after defeating the Chudasama ruler Graharipu or Grahario I who molested the pilgrims going to the celebrated shrine.

In A.D. 1025 Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni, having heard the stories circulated by the Hindus that the invader could have destroyed no idol in India, had the idol of Somanatha been pleased with them, descended upon this temple with his iconoclastic zeal to dispel the *false* belief of the Hindus. After capturing the temple he ordered the *linga* to be disfigured and broken into pieces and thereafter the whole of the temple to be burnt to the ground. The Sultan did not stay there for more than a fortnight! According to the *official* (contemporary) historians, he turned away in haste since Paramadev, the great ruler of the Hindus, was advancing with a force to block the Sultan's way of retreat. With a view to avoiding a conflict, the Sultan had, therefore, to take a more westerly route through Cutch and Sind. Thereafter he reached safety after suffering great distress and hardships, as admitted both by Farrukhi and Gardizi.²

1 Muhammad Nazim, *The Life and Times of Sultan Mahamud of Ghazna* (Cambridge, 1931), pp. 118 and 220. The later historians, however, make the Sultan stay there for almost three years since, according to them, he was so charmed with the climate that he had resolved to settle there. Nor is it stated by any contemporary authority that he left a governor to complete the destruction.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 119; Gardizi, *Zainu'l-Akhbar* p. 87; and Farrukhi Diwan, f. 20b and 25a.

The Hindu king who opposed Mahmud in this expedition could be none other than Bhoja of Dhar whose dominions at that time extended to Kathiawar. Neither had any of his contemporaries the title of Paramara. Bhimadeva of Anhilawada-Pattan was merely a small king, possibly a vassal of Bhoja¹, and had fled away to Kanthkot on hearing of the advance of the Sultan's army.² He came into prominence, which became retrospective, only after the death of Bhoja in A.D. 1053. It is, however, gathered that he was forming a confederacy of local rulers to pursue the Sultan's army. It is quite likely that Bhoja may have been responsible for the rebuilding of the temple after its destruction by Mahmud of Ghazni. Udaipur *prashasti* of Bhoja (undated) claims that he defeated the Turukshkas (verse 19) and also built the Somanatha temple (verse 20);³ whereas the A.D. 1169 inscription, now housed in the Bhadrakali temple at Patan, credits Bhimadeva (A.D. 1022-72) with the rebuilding of this temple. It distinctly states that it was Bhimadeva's temple which Kumarapala had rebuilt.⁴ The most reasonable hypothesis, therefore, is that both Bhima and Bhoja had joined to rebuild the temple⁵ and Kumarapala's inscription, referred to above, omitted the name of Bhoja probably because he belonged to another line of kings. This Bhoja-Bhima temple may be taken to have been built somewhere in the second quarter of the 11th century A.D.

1 K. M. Munshi, *The Glory That Was Gurjaradesha*, Part III, the Imperial Gujaras (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1944), pp. 138-40.

2 Ibid., p. 139; Muhammad Nazim, *op. cit.*, p. 116; Gardizi, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

3 *Epigraphia Indica*, I (Calcutta, 1892), pp. 222-238.

4 *Historical Inscriptions of Gujarat*, part 2 (Forbes Gujarati Sabha, Bombay 4, 1935) Chalukya Vamsha Lekha, pp. 62-63.

5 K. M. Munshi, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

From the *Prabandha Chintamani* of Merutunga-charya we gather that Mayanalladevi, wife of Karna Raja (son of Bhimadeva) and mother of Siddharaja, visited the temple and on finding that the local ruler Panchakula was troubling the pilgrims asked her son to abolish the tax. About A.D. 1100 Jayasimha Siddharaja himself made a pilgrimage to the temple with the avowed motive of getting a son but there is no evidence to prove that he did anything towards its repairs.

In the Bhadrakali temple inscription of A.D. 1169, it is stated that Jayasimha's successor Kumarapala built a *meru* type of *prasad* at Somanatha. It repeats the *Pauranic* story that Somraj built the temple of gold, Krishna of silver and Bhima of large stones (verse 15). The inscription further tells us that Kumarapala also raised the fortifications, constructed a *nrupashala*, a well and a *patashalika* besides adorning the *kalashas* of many smaller temples (verses 24-27). Parenthetically we also learn that the temple had gone into ruins because of the foolishness and the greed of the ministers (verse 18).¹ A *Someshvara-mandapa* called the *meghadhvani* was added to the main temple of Kumarapala by Bhimadeva II as revealed by *Shridhara Prashasti* of A.D. 1216 at Dev-Pattan (verse 23).²

The *Cintra Prashasti* of Saranga Dev (A.D. 1292) refers to the building of five temples to the north of the *mandapa* of Someshvara and also a *torana* supported by two pillars by Ganda Tripurantaka.³

The temple which by this time had become quite big, however, could not escape desecration much longer. In

1 *Historical Inscriptions of Gujarat*, op. cit., pp. 62-3.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 106 and *Epigraphia Indica*, op. cit., pp. 439-440.

3 *Ibid.*, pp. 271-287. The inscription previously having been removed from Somanatha is now located in the Quinta of Don John De Castro at Cintra in Portugal.

A.D. 1297 Alaf Khan, a general of the Khilji rulers of Delhi, marched upon Kathiawar and the ancient fame of the temple was again cast down. After the invader had turned his back, another reconstruction of the temple was undertaken by the Chudasama ruler, Mahipaladeva (A.D. 1308-1325), and was completed by his son, Ra Khangar (A.D. 1325-51). The latter is also credited with setting up a *linga* in the temple.¹

An invasion of the temple in A.D. 1318 is also alluded to by Cousens,² but without any details regarding the invader. The next major invasion was in A.D. 1394 by Muzaffar Khan, a governor of Gujarat, who carried out a furious war against the neighbouring chiefs and once more destroyed the temple. Some sort of a temporary shrine must have been again built, since soon after, in A.D. 1413, Ahmed Shah, the grandson of Muzaffar, is said to have destroyed the temple of Sompura while returning from the battle against the Ra of Junagadh. The local Hindu tradition, based mostly on Diwan Ranchhodji Amarji's *Twarikh-i-Sorath*, claims that Mahmud Begda or Muzaffar II in A.D. 1459 again desecrated the temple. It is, however, accepted that he led an army against the Chudasama ruler, Ra Mandlik, who surrendered Junagadh and himself embraced Islam. From now onwards the whole of Sorath came directly under the Muslims.

The temple, nevertheless, continued to function as the sacred shrine of the Hindus till A.D. 1669 when Aurangzeb ordered its demolition along with other notable Hindu shrines in the country.³ But from the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* it

¹ Henry Cousens, *Somnath and other Mediaeval Temples in Kathiawad*, Archaeological Survey of India, Volume XLV, Imperial Series, (Calcutta, 1931), p. 25.

² *Ibid.*, p. 26.

³ K. M. Pannikar, *A Survey of Indian History* (Bombay, 1947), p. 195.

appears that the devout Hindus defied the orders of the local governor and continued worshipping the deity till as late as A.D. 1706 when the shrine was ordered to be converted into a mosque. The accretions to suit the environments of a mosque comprised: (a) insertion of arches with *fleur-de-lis* pattern between the pillars of the nave in the *mandapa*; (b) blocking the back of the *garbhagriha* by sweeping down the western portion of the *pradakshina marga*; (c) erecting minarets over the main entrance; (d) raising the level of the *mandapa* floor by an addition of about one-foot thick layer of roughly-hewn blocks of stones which entirely concealed the Hindu features at the *garbhagriha* door-step; (e) removal of the bracket-images from the *mandapa* pillars supporting the ceiling and (f) conversion, essentially external, of the *vimana* and the domical roof of the *mandapa* into roughly built domes.

Even as a mosque it does not seem to have been in use much longer since there is nothing to prove in the shape of repairs or maintenance. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* of Ali Mohammad Khan written in A.D. 1760 does not testify to its use as a mosque at that time.¹ The death of Aurangzeb in A.D. 1707 resulted in general disorder and widespread anarchy notably in the viceroyalty of Gujarat. The rapid succession of emperors on the imperial throne had undermined the solidarity of the empire; the Marathas were challenging the Mughal authority both in the peninsula and Gujarat. In A.D. 1783, Ahalyabai, as a sequel to the Maratha conquest of the province, erected a new shrine of Somanatha, a little distance away from this much-pillaged temple. In December 1812, the Gaekwad of Baroda acquired control over the shrine of Somanatha from the Nawab of Junagadh. As revealed by the writings of Lieut. Postans,

¹ Gaekwad Oriental Series, XLIII, English Translation (Baroda, 1928), pp. 118-20.

near about A.D. 1838, the temple-roof was used as a battery for heavy ordnances to protect the neighbouring port of Veraval. Nearly a hundred years later, in A.D. 1922, Shri K. M. Munshi found the *mandapa* open to sky and being used as a stable. This, in brief, is the story of the temple before its proposed renovation.

3. INTRODUCTORY TO EXCAVATIONS

From the foregoing account it is clear that the temple was more or less neglected after the first quarter of the 18th century and was fast falling into ruins. The salt-laden damp sea breeze had joined to bring about an early decadence of the body fabric. It was not until the arrival of Lord Curzon that effective steps for the preservation of the monument were taken. On his initiative, a compound-wall was constructed and the enclosed area around the temple was levelled up. In the temple itself, at various places underpinned masonry was inserted to save the superstructure from falling. We need not agree with the technique of conservation, which was alike unscientific and crude, but cannot deny the fact either that these measures, to a large extent, were responsible for the survival of the monument till its demolition in November, 1950. The monument, no doubt, was in a very dilapidated condition and would not stand the weight of any superstructure proposed over it. The pillars and lintels of the *mandapa* were in an advanced stage of corrosion with all surface carvings obliterated; the corbelled circles forming the ceiling shared with the pillars the general wreck; the outside of the temple, notably the sea-side portion, was entirely honey-combed and the sculptures had weathered past recognition.

The latest idea to reconsecrate the temple took shape in 1948. After Junagadh's accession to India, the late Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel visited Somanatha in the com-

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pany of H. H. the Jam Saheb of Nawanagar, and having seen the condition of the temple and cogitating over its past glory and the sanctity attached to it, expressed his wish that the temple should be re-built. Thereafter, a Board named as Somanatha Board of Trustees was formed with H. H. the Jam Saheb as the Chairman. To assist the Board on technical matters, an Advisory Committee consisting of architects, engineers and the Director-General of Archaeology in India was constituted with Shri K. M. Munshi as the Chairman. This introduced a missionary zeal in the affairs of Somanatha. The Committee in its second meeting passed a resolution to the effect that excavations should be carried out in the temple for purposes of collecting all the data regarding its early history. The excavations unfortunately were carried out in a summary fashion and were almost completely unanalytical. Without any depreciation of the information revealed, which was restricted essentially to the presentation of disjected phenomena, these excavations disturbed much of the strata in the process of discovery. Strangely enough, no presentable or precise records were maintained for all these soundings which numbered no fewer than twenty. Dr. N. P. Chakravarty, the then Director-General of Archaeology in India, disapproved of these excavations which subsequently were discontinued. In the third meeting in July 1950, Shri M. S. Vats, the present Director-General, while reiterating the necessity for a careful and well-stratified excavation, also laid down that "detailed photographs, plans and elevations of the sides from inside and out and all the ceilings should be prepared and wherever excavations are made... the points should be carefully recorded both by drawings and by photographs." Shri K. M. Munshi who, with great assiduity and admirable balance, had threaded the heterogeneous elements of

Gujarat history into a coherent story¹, was very keen to recover the complete evidence regarding the Somanatha temple and on the basis of his own original researches had framed a questionnaire to be worked upon by scientific digging. With a view to conducting proper excavations, I was deputed by the Director-General of Archaeology in India initially for a period of one month, which later on was extended to include another month. At the instance of Shri K. M. Munshi, I was again sent for a week for further examination of the material during the demolition period.²

4. OBJECTS OF THE EXCAVATIONS AND A SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS

As already stated, the history of this temple suffers from lack of material evidence. The recent "opening up" of the problem by about a month's digging does claim to reduce the proportions of the lacunæ in our knowledge. The excavations, however, were regulated mainly by two objectives: (a) to ascertain the succession of structural periods or phases and to correlate them stratigraphically with other known or partly-known features and (b) to prove or disprove the hypothesis that the temple destroyed by Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni lay somewhere near the Bhida temple.³ With these ends in view, three trenches were laid out: (i) across the *garbhagriha*, north-south, (ii) across the *mandapa*, north-south and (iii) longitudinal, across the *garbhagriha* and the *mandapa*, east-west. Within these cuttings, the results achieved have been quite

1 K. M. Munshi, *op. cit.*

2 I am highly indebted to Shri U. J. Bhatt, Secretary P.W.D., and Chief Engineer, Saurashtra Government, and Shri P. K. Shunglu Hon. Secretary, Somanatha Board of Trustees, for the generous assistance in the execution of the work.

3 Muhammad Nazim, *op. cit.*, pp. 213-214.

definitive and it has been possible to reconstruct, with some conviction, the essentials of the earlier temples.

Two structural phases preceded the construction of Kumarapala (A.D. 1169) although there are indications to prove the existence of a still earlier structural activity. But the evidence revealed is so fragmentary that they have not been classed separately. The earlier of these two, here-in called Phase I, in conception, consisted of two chambers—a *garbhagriha* and a *mandapa*—approached on the east by a porch with stepped entrance. Apparently this was the only entrance to the temple. The *mandapa* was enclosed on three sides by dwarf walls (partially available on the east) possibly supporting inclined seats. The water outlet in the centre of the northern wall of the *garbhagriha*, and the *brahmashila* point to its being a Shaivite temple. The latter rested on a square piece of Kanjur stone masonry, essentially hollow, resembling a deep cistern but filled in with alternate courses of rubble and laid stones and going as deep as the foundations themselves. The plinth of this temple was all plain save the foliate scroll on the medial moulding. Some portions of the temple, notably the entrance steps, the *mandapa* floor and the *brahmashila* show signs of deliberate breakages which could, on some plausibility, be attributed to Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni. At places one could still notice black spots, obviously charred, indicative of intense firing to which the temple was subjected by the Sultan. The interstices of the floor stones in the *mandapa* were found to contain molten lead filling. The whole of the temple was built of a distinctive thingrained reddish sandstone.

Phase II temple very closely followed the plan and conception of Phase I and, in contradistinction to the latter, was built of whitish sandstone of comparatively coarser grain. This too was a Shaivite temple evidenced by

another water outlet nearly 1'-3" immediately above the former. Its plinth was super-imposed over the earlier plinth and was also of identical height. Since this temple was built over the debris of the earlier one, raising of the floor-level, both inside and outside, was inevitable. Although constructed in the 11th century A.D., it was devoid of the customary *pitha* with string courses of elephants, horses and men. It followed the pattern of the preceding temple. Besides having the foliate scroll on the medial moulding, its plinth on the upper half had three sculptured pieces on either face, distributed equally into the entire length of the *mandapa*. The *garbhagriha* plinth is not available. A noteworthy 11th century feature is the seemingly octagonal arrangement of the *mandapa* pillars for the nave. There was no entrance to the *mandapa* from the north or the south. In plan the *garbhagriha* and the *mandapa* of both these temples fitted into a rectangle, a feature of the rather earlier temples.¹

The structure built by Kumarapala in A.D. 1169 with all later additions and reconstructions, forms the ruins of the popularly called old Somanatha temple. Phase III is, therefore, a composite phase representing the developments of nearly 550 years.² It is different alike in design and plan from the two temples referred to above. Notable features of this temple are (a) the basement moulding or the *mahapitha*; (b) the axial length being diagonal of both the *garbhagriha* and the *mandapa*; (c) the enlarged *mandapa* and the *pradakshina marga* with opening on the south and north and also on the west in case of the latter; (d) the design of the pillars and the octagonal arrangement of the nave; (e) ornate style of the *mandovara* with

¹ Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture* (Buddhist and Hindu), (Taraporewala, Bombay, 1942), p. 143.

² For an authenticated description of the temple, see Henry Cousens, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-33.

sculptures even in the recesses; (f) introduction of the black basalt stone for the flooring both in the *mandapa* and the *garbhagriha*.

Likewise the sea-wall, too, had three distinct stages of building including the one attributed to Kumarapala. In the first stage it was much nearer the temple, being only 67 feet away from its southern face. Built on sound foundations, it was nearly 5 feet wide at the top. This, in origin, was earlier than Phase I of the temple. A reconstruction contemporaneous with Phase I of the temple, however, is clearly discernible when its width was increased to 6 feet.

Associated with Phase II of the temple is the scrappy revetment which was built in a stepped fashion, 11 feet further south over the sloping debris of the earlier sea-wall which evidently could not have survived the invasion of Sultan Mahmud.

In the third stage, the nature and the size of the sea-wall underwent a considerable change; from sea-wall it was turned into a fort wall.¹ It was in consonance with the elaborately resurrected temple which Kumarapala had constructed. Built about 6 feet further south, it had a basal width of nearly 40 feet and had the outside face battered. This 6 feet space in between its inner face and the earlier revetment was filled in with earth and small stone debris. Like the temple, this fort-wall must have been repaired from time to time until Lord Curzon, finding it completely neglected and possibly also collapsed, built a narrower wall over its top as one of the measures for the conservation of the shrine. The overall extant height of this sea-wall was 20 feet and the width at the top which was also provided with a rampart-walk consisted of only 8 feet.

1 Cf. also Bhadrakali temple inscription.

5. DESCRIPTION OF THE CUTTINGS¹*Cutting across the Garbhagriha*

Previous excavations in the *garbhagriha* had exposed in its northern wall two water-outlets, one below the other, and two *brahmashilas* of which one was found *in situ* while the other in the north-eastern corner of the sanctum. The latter evidently had been displaced from its original position, of which no reliable record exists. The strata around the former had also been dug out in the process of its discovery.

With a view to ascertaining the full sequence of reconstructions and relating them with the known floor-level, a trench, 155 feet long, 5-10 feet wide was laid across the *garbhagriha*; the portion of the trench within the cella was only 5 feet wide. At places the trench was carried down to the natural soil which was reached at an average depth of 17 feet below the present surface. The reconstructions fall into three broad phases, I-III, with sub-phases into the latter.

Phase I.—The temple stood on solid Kanjur stone foundations about 90 feet wide narrowing down to a depth of upwards of 13 feet below the then ground level. It was built of thin-grained reddish sandstone of which only two courses of a total height of $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet are available. Contemporaneous with this are: a water outlet 'A' ($4\frac{1}{2}$ " wide and 6" high) pierced in the northern wall of the *garbhagriha* and a *brahmashila* which rested on a square piece of dry-built Kanjur stone masonry, essentially hollow resembling a deep cistern, but filled in with rubble and alternate courses of well-laid stones and going as deep as the foundations themselves. The top of the *brahmashila* is

¹ Within the scope of this short report these descriptions are not intended to be exhaustive.

marginally chamfered to a width of 6" on all the four sides leaving an area of $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet square in the centre. The functional utility of this is difficult to determine in the absence of the *linga* which was placed over it and to which presumably it relates.¹ The circumambulatory passage around the *garbhagriha* was 9 feet 6 inches wide. On the west, however, no traces of this exist since the site has been very badly pillaged. The available plinth of the *garbhagriha* measuring 3 feet in height was all plain save the medial recesses. The bottom of the outlet which was 5 feet 11 inches higher than the outside ground level was the first floor-level inside the *garbhagriha*. Between this and the ground-level, the core of the filling consisted of Kanjur stone masonry pointed with lime mortar. On the south 20 to 21 feet away from the outside face of the Phase I temple, was encountered a Kanjur stone retaining wall 6 feet high, 10 feet wide at the base and battered on both sides to a width of nearly 8 feet at the extant top. This is a pre-Phase I wall since some of the stones in the foundation of Phase I are seen over-riding and are, therefore, structurally later than the Kanjur stone wall which, presumably, was a part of an independent structure. In the foundation itself were observed many sculptured stone pieces used as filling, indicating the presence in the neighbourhood, of a still earlier structure the debris of which was utilised for the foundation-filling.

Phase II.—In Phase II the *garbhagriha* underwent little change as far as the size was concerned. Because of

¹ According to the *shilpa shastras* *linga* is divided into three equal parts, viz., *brahma bhag*, *vishnu bhag* and *shiva bhag*. Of these, the first, which also is the lower-most, is square in section. The second, comprising the portion encompassed by the *jaladhari* or the *yonipatta*, is octagonal while the third, being the portion visible to the eye, is round. The centrally squared space of the *brahmashila* may thus provide a clue to the intended length of the *linga*.

the accumulated debris of the earlier temple, the raising of the floor-level both inside and outside the *garbhagriha* was inevitable. Inside, the floor-level is indicated by another water outlet 'B', 1 foot 5 inches above the former. It measures $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide and 5 inches high. The earlier *linga* of the temple had since been uprooted and broken, in Phase II, a new *linga* was installed on the same *brahma-shila* which presumably was left undisturbed only so far as its position was concerned. On the outside, the water outlet discharged itself into a regular shallow drain carved into the stone. Of this phase in the *garbhagriha*, only one course of stone and a few floor-stones were left. The circumambulatory passage was of the same width as that of Phase I. The plinth of this phase was not available within the width of the trench.

Phase III.—This phase, ascribable to Kumarapala (A.D. 1169), witnessed an enlargement of the temple. It is significant, however, that the size of the *garbhagriha* remained the same whereas the *pradakshina marga* was extended to an overall width of about 12 feet. It, however, did not result in any raising of the floor-level in the *garbhagriha*, since, between A.D. 1030 and 1169, there was no invasion of the temple to warrant the desecration of the *linga* and the same, therefore, continued to be worshipped. Distinctive of this phase is the use of the black basalt stone. Inside the *garbhagriha*, wherever the old flooring had worn out, it was replaced by black basalt stones. In the water outlet 'B', a carved drain piece of this black stone was inserted to ensure against leakage of water into the wall itself. Of the same variety of stone a new *jaladhari*, which encompassed the standing *linga* in two halves, was substituted. One such piece was found lying in the south-west corner of the cella. Both in the *pradakshina marga* and on the outside, the floor-level was raised by

about 9-11 inches. The plinth of this phase was elaborately carved in *maha pitha* tradition. The width of the *garbhagriha* along the section was about 72 feet. It appears that from here onwards, the *garbhagriha* walls were never pulled down, since the same type of masonry continues up to the existing height. 1 foot 10 inches immediately above water-outlet 'B' is the outlet 'C', 5 inches in height and the same in width. This raising of the floor-level synchronized with the use of the other *brahmashila*. The latter is $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet square and is similarly chamfered marginally to a width of 6 inches. In the central space are also to be seen nine holes.

Cutting across the Mandapa

Previous excavations had laid bare 5 feet 9 inches below surface a flooring immediately outside the northern approaches to the *mandapa*. The precise relation of this with the structures was, however, not known.

With a view to relating *inter alia* the existing sea-wall with any known phase of the temple, a trench 344 feet long and 8-15 feet wide was laid across the *mandapa*. The natural soil to which the cutting was carried at some selected places was reached at an average depth of 16 feet 6 inches below the present surface. The same three phases were met with in this cutting as well.

Phase I.—Like the *garbhagriha*, the *mandapa* too was built on solid Kanjur stone foundations going about $12\frac{1}{2}$ feet deep below the present surface. The maximum width of the *mandapa* was 56 feet. The intended height of its plinth was 5 feet 6 inches of which 3 feet 2 inches only was available. It appears that the upper half of the plinth, which may have been considerably despoiled by the invader, was bodily removed when building Phase II *mandapa*. The *mandapa* floor-level was 5 feet 6 inches higher

than the outside ground level. Within the width of the trench, on the *mandapa* floor, were found the remains of three pillar-bases each of which, on plan, was 1 foot 7 inches square with recessed corners. Two of these also bear leaf designs over them. The floor-stones of the *mandapa* were found to contain molten lead in the interstices. Associated with this phase on the north was a flooring the extent of which, as determined by this trench, was upwards of 76 feet from the northern face of the *mandapa*. Below this flooring and separated from it by 4 inches of lime pebble accumulation, was another flooring of softer Kanjur stones. The latter outstretched the limits of the former by 62 feet. The exact relationship of this flooring with the temple was, however, not wholly clear. Other pre-Phase I structures met with in this trench comprised the sea-wall and a Kanjur stone retaining wall running roughly parallel along the length of the temple on the south. This possibly is a continuation of the one discovered in the Cutting across the *garbhagriha*. The former (i.e. the sea-wall) was built of lime stone on 18 feet wide foundations and was available to a height of 3 feet. At the time of the construction of Phase I temple, the width of the sea-wall was increased from 5 feet to 6 feet.

Phase II.—The *mandapa* of Phase II was of the same width as that of Phase I. Its plinth, which was 5 feet 6 inches in height, was raised from the top of the lower half of the earlier plinth. This involved raising of the floor-level by about 3 feet 9 inches. In the filling, in between the two floor levels, can be seen many carved stone pieces. Associated with this floor are six octagonal pillar bases, each side of which measures 1 foot 3 inches. These pillars when reconstructed conform to an octagonal arrangement for the nave. Further clearances of this plinth showed that on either side, on its upper half, it contained three sculptured

pieces distributed along the entire length of the *mandapa*. It is significant that on the south, i.e., towards the sea, these sculptures depicted images of gods, while on the north they formed mere floral patterns. The images were enclosed in a niche of fret work. One of these contained Shiva *Tripurantaka* while the other *Lakuleshwara*. The location of the third, however, was found badly damaged.

The sea-wall associated with this phase consisted of scrappy revetments built in a stepped fashion, on the sloping debris of the earlier sea-wall from which it was separated by 11 feet.

Phase III.—Phase III represents the enlarged temple of Kumarapala and its subsequent repairs. The width of the *mandapa* was extended to 74 feet and both on the south and the north stepped entrances were provided. Each of these measures 6 feet 5 inches wide. In the extension filling of this temple were seen sculptured images sometimes also upturned, ceiling-stone pieces and many other carved stones. It appears that whatever rough and ready material was at hand, they utilised it for their purpose. The *mandapa* was built in the typical post-11th century architecture of Gujarat. But as is customary, the floor-level inside the *mandapa* was not in level with the top of the *narthara*. Possibly the level inside was conditioned more by the earlier floor levels both in the *mandapa* and the *garbhagriha* than by architectural principles. Characteristic of this phase was the black basalt stone which was used for the flooring both in the *mandapa* and in the *garbhagriha*. The floor-level in the former was only 9-11 inches higher than the preceding floor of Phase II. The entrance steps on the south had completely disappeared while on the north they were only partially available. Here they extended to a length of 23 feet from the threshold. The sea-wall contemporaneous with this phase was

built 6 feet further south from the outside face of the revetment of Phase II. The intervening space was filled up with loose earth and small stone debris. It had a basal width of nearly 40 feet and rose imposingly with a battered frontage to a height of 20 feet. The top 6 feet and 6 inches of this wall were built at the instance of Lord Curzon in the early decades of this century. The stones of this wall showed signs of extensive exposure and weathering.

Subsequent repairs of the *mandapa* floor indicated the use of yellow stones which, because of their being subjected to intense firing, had become red. One of these yellow floor-stones bears an incomplete inscription in *devanagari* script dated Vikrama Samvata 1657, thereby testifying to the use of the floor till that date. With a little bit of rehabilitation the floor-level inside the *mandapa* remained the same until the year 1706 when the temple was converted into a mosque and a one-foot thick layer of roughly-hewn stones was added to conceal the earlier Hindu features notably at the *garbhagriha* door-step.

Longitudinal Cutting across the Mandapa and the Garbhagriha

In order to relate the floor-levels in the *mandapa* with those in the *garbhagriha* and also to know the extent of the temple on the east and the nature of the main entrance, a longitudinal cutting 6 feet wide was made across the *mandapa* and the *garbhagriha*. All the three phases met with in the other two cuttings were also represented here.

Excavations revealed that Phase I temple consisted of two chambers only—*garbhagriha* and *mandapa*—with an overall length of upwards of 64 feet. The entrance to the temple was through a porch, access to which could be obtained by means of six steps of a total height of 4 feet.

The average height of a riser was 8 inches and the width of a tread 15 inches. At some places the edges of these steps were found broken, evidently not by usage which normally would result in rounding off, but by the hand of the invader. The porch measures 15 feet 5 inches long and 18 feet wide. The floor-level inside the *garbhagriha* was roughly 6 inches higher than that of the *mandapa*, which in turn was 4 inches higher than that of the porch.

Phase II.—In conception and in size the temple of this phase closely resembled Phase I. It was actually superimposed over the earlier plinth. As already stated, the floor-level in the *mandapa* was raised by 3 feet 9 inches. In the *garbhagriha* there was not so much of raising. The extent of the *mandapa* on the east is indicated by the pavement-stone mouldings. The entrance steps on the east were not available and may have been demolished at the time of the erection of Phase III. The floor-level of the *garbhagriha* was 13 inches lower than that in the *mandapa*, which, in turn, was 5 inches higher than that in the porch.

Phase III.—The third chamber of the temple, viz., the *meghadhvani* had completely disappeared save the lowest mouldings of the plinth. The temple, therefore, was left with only two chambers, the *garbhagriha* and the *gudha mandapa*, placed diagonally to each other and having a total length of 98 feet. The entrance steps on the east were only partially available. In this phase, as already stated, the floor-level in the *mandapa* was raised by 9-10 inches whereas there was no raising in the *garbhagriha*. As a result thereof the floor-level inside the *mandapa* was nearly 2 feet higher than that in the *garbhagriha*. The entrance to the *garbhagriha* was marked by a *chandra-shila* flanked on either side by a conch and a conventionalised tortoise, all in black stone. Later on a plain contracted door-frame was inserted with a higher threshold, ascended

by two steps resting directly on the *chandrashila* referred to above. This synchronised with the water outlet 'C'.

6. IN CONCLUSION: IDENTIFICATION AND CHRONOLOGY OF THE 'ORIGINAL' TEMPLE

It is always best to proceed from the particular to the general, from the known to the unknown; to try to relate a particular enquiry to some matter of general interest. One of such matters was to find the original site of the temple of Somanatha. At the risk of iteration, I enter into syllogism of the basis of the available evidence.

Regarding the structure of the temple Dr. Nazim writes,¹ "Its foundation was laid on large blocks of stone, and the roof was raised on 56 columns of teak which had been imported from Africa. The temple had a pyramidal roof thirteen storeys high, the top of which was surmounted by fourteen spherical knobs of gold which glittered in the sun and were visible from a long distance. The floor was made of planks of teak, and the interstices were filled with lead." He bases his account on the authorities of Ibn Zafir, Sibti Ibnu'l-Jawzi and Ibnu'l-Athir. All these chroniclers are non-contemporary and for their source have drawn mostly from as-Sabi's *Dhail* which contains *in extenso* the letters of victory written by the Sultan to the Caliph. There is no impersonal and unbiased authority to testify to these descriptions. In the nature of the case, it is quite possible that the Sultan may have occasionally distorted facts in order to illustrate or emphasize some vice or virtue. Divorced from historical precision, such accounts are not wholly reliable. Al-Biruni, who accompanied the Sultan on this expedition, gives some details about the location of the site and also repeats the *Purāṇic* legend regarding the origin of the temple.

1 Muhammad Nazim, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

Taking these descriptions to be literally true, Dr. Nazim had identified a place near Bhidia temple as the original site of Somanatha.¹ This place is situated along the sea nearly a mile to the west of the present temple and thus falls far beyond the fortifications. Whereas it is definitely known that the shrine of Somanatha lay within a strong fortress which the Sultan had to besiege prior to its capture.² In view of these incongruities and in the light of the details unfolded by the excavations, the contentions of Dr. Nazim in respect of the site of the 'original' temple seem rather untenable.

It is universally accepted, on the basis of the Bhadrakali temple inscription, that Kumarapala rebuilt and also repaired the temple of Bhima I. Whether the latter built his temple on a fresh site or on the same site where stood the temple demolished by Sultan Mahmud was the point of specific enquiry.

As already stated, excavations have revealed the remains of two earlier temples below the temple of Kumarapala. Of these, the middle one (Phase II) can be definitely ascribed to Bhima and Bhoja on the strength of the inscriptions cited above. Phase I temple was of modest size and had nowhere teak planks used as flooring. The interstices of the *mandapa* floor stones, no doubt, were found to contain molten lead. From the extant remains of the three pillars in the *mandapa*, nor does it seem likely that the roof was supported by 56 columns. At places, it was burnt and also deliberately broken. This ruined temple can be none other than the one demolished by Sultan Mahmud. Bhima and Bhoja who were responsible for the hasty retreat of the Sultan would not build a temple over the plinth of an unknown temple. Furthermore, the *brah-*

1 Muhammad Nazim, *op. cit.*, pp. 213-14.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 117, Gardizi, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

mashila of Phase I continued to be used in Phase II and Phase III which proves the Hindu tradition that the place of *linga* installation should remain the same irrespective of the reconstructions. Parenthetically, it also explains why the proposed new Somanatha temple is to be constructed on the same site.

* * *

Another matter of general enquiry was the date of this temple. No direct archaeological evidence regarding this was obtained from the excavations and whatever has been recorded below is either circumstantial or inferential.

Hieun Tsang, the Chinese traveller who visited India between A.D. 630 and 644, does not make any mention of the shrine although during his itineraries he had come as near as Girnar which is only 52 miles from Somanatha. There can be only three explanations: (a) no such temple existed during his time; (b) it must have been an insignificant temple to attract the attention of the traveller; and (c) the temple being a Brahmanical one would obviously not find a place in the writings of Hieun Tsang who was interested mostly in Buddhist monuments.

Al-Biruni writing in about A.D. 1030 informs us that the fortress of Somanatha had been built about a 100 years before its capture by Sultan Mahmud.¹ The statement, no doubt, has only an indirect bearing on the shrine.

Another dating factor is the condition of the water-outlets in the *garbhagriha* indicating thereby the usage in terms of years in respect of each. The middle one ('B') started functioning in about A.D. 1030 when the temple was reconstructed after its demolition by Sultan Mahmud and continued to be used till about the third quarter of the 15th century, since the floor-level inside the *garbha-*

¹ Al-Biruni, *Tahqiq ma li'l-Hind*, ii, p. 105; Muhammad Nazim, *op. cit.*, p. 117, fn. 1.

griha was not disturbed until that time. Within this period of nearly 450 years the edges of the outlet became rounded by the constant flow of water. The upper one remained in use from the third quarter of the fifteenth century till c. A.D. 1706 when the temple was converted into a mosque, a period of about 220 years. The edges in this case remained fairly sharp. The condition of the lower outlet would postulate a period of nearly 300 years for its life. This brings us to the middle of the 8th century. The 'original' temple, therefore, might have been built somewhere towards the middle of the 8th century with a margin of two or three decades on either side.

In the present stock-taking the following points, though apparently minor but nevertheless significant, also deserve mention :—

A stone lying in the core of Kumarapala's masonry to the right of the main entrance and assumably misplaced, bears on it an inscription which on paleographic grounds is ascribable to the Valabhi period (A.D. 480-767). A superficial corroboration is also provided by the ceramic evidence. In the lower levels (essentially pre-Phase I) of these cuttings was encountered a distinctive class of polished red ware sometimes also painted in black, generally with parallel bands. The ware is made out of a carefully prepared clay and also seems to be "wet-smoothed", before firing, which was done under oxidizing conditions of the kiln. Possibly the pots were also burnished after firing to obtain the polished surface. An outstanding type in this ware is the bottle-necked sprinkler. The shape, however, is of great interest and belongs to the early centuries of the Christian Era.¹

¹ During the recent excavations at Hastinapur similar vases have been recovered from strata ascribable to c. 1st-2nd century A.D. although the evidence at Kausambi (1951 excavations) points to their survival in the Gupta period as well.

Shreds of identical fabric are reported to have been also recovered from Valla, the ancient Valabhipur, and Jasdan—sites associated with the Valabhi period. Although the true horizon of this ware, both chronologically and stratigraphically, has not been fixed at either of these sites, its occurrence on both, one of which was the capital of the Valabhi rulers, deserves some consideration.

A significant piece of evidence is presented by the presence in the foundation-filling of the 'original' temple (Phase I) of many sculptured stones which indicate the existence in the neighbourhood of a still earlier temple, the debris of which was utilised for purposes of filling. On the southern side, both in the Cutting across the *garbhagriha* and that across the *mandapa* were discovered Kanjur stone retaining walls which stratigraphically are earlier than Phase I of the temple. In the latter Cutting again, we have already noticed that stage I of the sea-wall was, in origin, earlier than Phase I of the temple and also was contemporary with Kanjur stone retaining walls.

These facts point to the prior existence in the neighbourhood of some structure which either was demolished or had itself fallen into ruins at the time of the building of Phase I temple. In the present state of our knowledge, however, it is difficult to comment upon the precise nature and the date of this structure. According to the *Puranic* legend, Phabhasa was famous for sun worship¹ and it may be quite likely that the structure referred to above may have been a Surya temple. The inference, no doubt, does not pretend to be conclusive and the matter is still open to future research on the subject.

¹ Formerly the Sun God shone over Prabhasa so brightly that his wife Chhaya could not come near him. On her request, therefore, he divided his light into 16 parts and distributed 12-16ths of it in the shape of Surya temples.

PART IV

**MUSLIM CHRONICLERS ON SOMANATHA
INSCRIPTIONS**

MUSLIM CHRONICLERS ON SOMANATHA

ABI RAHHAN-AL-BIRUNI,¹ who accompanied Sultan Mahmud to India and compiled his work on Indian culture, philosophy, astronomy, geography, etc., about A.D. 1031, quotes the legend of Soma's escape from Daksha's curse. According to him Somanatha was set up on the sea coast in such a way that the sea water, when high, would cover it at times. The natural phenomenon of ebb and flow may have been the origin of the legend that Soma, the Moon God, was devotedly occupied in bathing and serving the *Linga*. Some Muslim writers, in view of the similarity of Somanatha to Manat, thought that it was the same idol of Manat as was worshipped by the Arabs at Mecca before Islam, and transported to India by its worshippers, and hence their erroneous supposition that the idol had a human figure like the Manat of Mecca.² The famous mystic poet, Shaikh Faridu'd-Din Attar calls it by the name of Lat, another important deity worshipped by the Arabs at Mecca;³ but this view is equally wrong. The shrine, however, rose to great prominence chiefly on account of the favourable geographical situation of the town of Somanatha, it being an important port of call for ships between Africa and China. Possibly the sailors carried the fame of the idol far and wide. But from times immemorial it was a centre of tremendous living faith, and by the 10th century had come to occupy a pre-eminent position among the shrines of India.⁴

According to the *Wafayatu'l Ayan* of the famous

¹ *Tahqiq ma li 'l-Hind* by Al-Biruni, English translation by Sachau, Vol. II, pp. 102-3.

² *Zainul Akhbar* of Abu Said' Abdul-Hai Gardizi, p. 86; *Farukhi's Diwan*, f. 19(b); *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. X for 1881, p. 22.

³ *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*. Vol. VII, p. 883.

⁴ *Ibid*; *Tahqiq ma li 'l-Hind* by Al-Biruni (English translation by Sachau), Vol. II, p. 104; *Rauzatu's Safa* of Mir Khwand, Persian text (Nawal Kishor edition), Vol. IV, p. 41.

chronicler Ibn Khallikah, Sultan Mahmud was told that each of the thirty rings round the idol represented a period of 1000 years of its worship. The age of the idol on this computation would be 30,000 years. This belief, a gross exaggeration, certainly points to its antiquity. Firishta, while refusing to accept the identification of Somanatha with the Manat of Mecca, quotes the local Brahminical tradition which says that the former "stood near the harbour of Diu since the time of Krishna who disappeared at that spot 4000 years ago."¹ But Al-Biruni observes that the fortress wherein the idol of Somanatha and its treasures were lodged was not ancient, but was only 100 years old at his time.² The fortress then could be traced to the Chalukyas of Saurashtra.

These reports can now be checked by the excavations: (1) The red-stone Third Temple was the only temple, the ruins of the south wall of which are still lying embedded and is undoubtedly the one destroyed by Mahmud. (2) The *brahmashila* of the temple on which the original *Linga* was placed is surrounded by the foundation stone walls; the aperture Δ of the original temple is just a normal one, and there was no possibility of the sea coming to wash the *Linga* unless there were specific devices by which the tidal waters were brought into the *Jaladhari*. (3) The examination of the *garbhagriha* and the debris of the south wall, the steps on the east and the plinth stones of the temple in the south indicate, beyond doubt, that it was a temple of stone. (4) The wear of the aperture points to the use of this temple for nearly three hundred years; the temple which Mahmud destroyed existed for much longer than a hundred years.

¹ *Tarikh-i-Firishta*, Persian text (Nawal Kishor edition), p. 32.

² *Tahqiq ma li 'l-Hind* of Al-Biruni (English translation by Sachau), Vol. II, p. 105.

The construction of the Third Temple then must be placed about A.D. 800 during the time of the conquest of Saurashtra by the Pratihara emperor Nagbhata II of Kanauj.

The temple noticed by Al-Biruni was founded on large blocks of stone on the sea-shore in such a way that its walls were washed by the waves and the idol remained under water at appointed hours. It was a large edifice, the roof of which was carried on 56 well-ornamented columns of teak wood brought from Africa.¹ Out of these, six columns, highly studded with emeralds, rubies and other precious stones, were set up by the most prominent *rajas* of India, who probably vied with one another in their rich offerings to the temple.² M. Nazim, on the authority of Ibn'Zafir and Sib-t Ibnu'l Jauzi, speaks of the temple having "a pyramidal roof, thirteen storeys high, the top of which was surmounted by fourteen spherical knobs of gold which glittered in the sun and were visible from a long distance. The floor was made of planks of teak wood, and the interstices were filled with lead."³

The excavations of the *garbhagriha* right down to the sands clearly show that there is no chamber underneath the idol chamber. It is just a narrow *garbhagriha*. There may have been a cellar under the *sabha mandapa*. The *gudha mandapa* of this Third Temple shows distinct signs of stone pillars.

According to Muslim writers, the sanctuary wherein the idol stood was illuminated by jewelled chandeliers, and valuable draped curtains were hung over the doorway.⁴

1 *Kamilu't Tawarikh* of Ibnu'l Athir, Vol. IX, p. 24. *Tarikh-i-Firishta*, Persian text, p. 33.

2 *Rauzat's Safa*, Persian text Vol. IV, p. 42.

3 *The Life and Times of Mahmud of Ghazna*, p. 212.

4 *Kamilu't Tawarikh*, Vol. IX, p. 241; *Tahqiq ma li 'l-Hind* of Al-Biruni (Sachau's English translation), p. 103.

The passage leading to it had standing posts all along for those allowed the worshippers to enter the sanctum. In front of the sanctum there was suspended a heavy chain of gold, 200 *manns* in weight,¹ with gold bells² to announce the appointed hours of worship. Adjoining this chamber was a repository wherein precious stones and innumerable costly images of gold and silver were stored, but Ibnul' Athir locates this store-room "under the idol chamber."³ These statements are clearly untrue. The shrine had 10,000 villages for its maintenance, had 1,000 Brahmins⁴ to perform the rituals specially at the time of eclipses, 300 musicians and dancing girls to sing and dance at the temple gates, 300 barbers to shave the pilgrims and a large staff of couriers to bring daily fresh flowers from Kashmir to garland the idol and fresh Ganga water to wash it with.

Several Muslim chronicles expressed the view that Somanatha had a human form. Most European writers owe their information to them and adopt the same view. They authoritatively quote the fictitious story of the Brahmins' sumptuous offer of ransom to Mahmud to spare the idol and

1 According to H. C. Raverty one *mann* was equal to about two *ratls* (*vide* Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. LXI, Part I, for 1892, p. 192) and Steingass calls a *ratl* equal 1/2 maund (Persian-English Dictionary, pp. 579 and 1316).

2 *Rauzatu's Safa*, Persian text, Vol. IV, p. 41; *Firishta* describes the chain as hung in a corner of the building. *Tarikh-i-Firishta*, Persian text.

3 *Kamilu't Tawarikh*, Vol. IX, p. 241.

4 The *Tarikh-i-Firishta* (Persian text, Nawal Kishor edition, p. 33) says that "2,000 villages were endowed to the temple" "2,000" being probably a misprint for "10,000". According to it, the temple establishment consisted of 2,000 Brahmins to perform the rituals, 500 singing and dancing girls and 300 musicians to sing and dance and 300 barbers to shave the devotees. *Rauzatu's Safa* of Mir Khwand (Persian text, Vol. IV, p. 41) contains the same account except that it mentions the endowment of 10,000 villages as given by Ibnu'l Athir who later curtails the number of singers and dancers to 350.

of his iconoclastic zeal in refusing the same and breaking, with his mace, first the nose and then the belly of the idol which yielded precious stones worth many times the amount of the Brahmins' offer of ransom. None of the contemporary and early non-contemporary writers, such as Al-Biruni, Farrukhi, Gardizi Ibnu'l-Jauzi, Ibnu'l-Athir says that it had a human figure or that it was suspended in the air without being attached to anything.¹ Their complete silence on the Brahmins' offer of a bribe and on Mahmud's breaking the nose and belly of the idol out of his iconoclastic zeal and recovering from inside a vast hoard of precious stones is noteworthy.

Briefly speaking, a careful study of their works reveals that: (1) the idol was the *Linga* of Shiva, seven cubits in height, of which two were buried in the basement, and about three cubits in girth; (2) it was of solid stone, not hollow so as to contain precious stones in it; (3) it was set with precious stones; (4) its rich covering was embroidered with figures of animals; (5) a crown studded with jewels hung over it from the ceiling; (6) it had thirty rings round it each of which was then (*i.e.* in A.D. 1026) related by the Brahmins to have represented a period of 1,000 years for which it had been worshipped; and (7) there were several minor images of gold and silver placed under its elevated pedestal to signify their attendance on it. Al-Biruni (writing in A.D. 1031) speaks of various *Lingas* in the temples in the south-west of Sind and Cutch.

All these opinions are now laid at rest.

(1) The original *brahmashila* was just normal, only a little broken at the corner.

(2) The whole construction being according to the

¹ See Watson's article on Shaikh Din's ballad published in the *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. VIII, for 1879, p. 160.

ancient science of temple architecture, there would not be a hollow *Linga* placed on this *shila*.

(3) It could not have been set with precious stones nor could it have a rich covering, for water could drip on the *Linga* itself.

(4) What was hung from the ceiling must have been a golden *Jaladhari* for dropping water on Shiva and could not be a crown.

(5) Looking to the size of the *garbhagriha*, the *Linga*, the *jaladhari* round the *Linga* could not possibly have 30 rings.

According to later writers, Mahmud took delight in plunder and bloodshed as a brigand chief and the chief motive of his expedition to Somanatha was his insatiable lust for gold, while others say that Raja Kunwar Pal of Prabhasa-Patan who was a Wagher by caste, slew a Musalman daily in front of the idol of Somanatha and made a *tilak* or mark on his forehead with the blood and that a saint, named Haji Mahmud (better known as Mangalauri Shah), invited Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni to avenge the wrong at the instance of the Prophet who had appeared to the saint in a dream.¹ This is not borne out by known historical facts. Ibnu'l Athir, Mir Khwand² and others mention that the Sultan had resolved upon making the expedition because he wanted to dispel the false belief of the Hindus that the invader could have destroyed no idols in India had they not incurred the displeasure of the great idol of Somanatha. These are pure legends.

Thus it appears that the original temple and fort of Somanatha were burnt to the ground in A.D. 1026. Some

¹ *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. VIII, (for 1879), pp. 153-62.

² *Kamilu't-Tawarikh*. Vol. IX, p. 241; and *Rauzatu's Safa*, Vol. IV, p. 41.

modern historians, in view of the new or conflicting testimony available, find it difficult to say with propriety where they actually stood 924 years ago. It was suggested by some that the temple probably represented the remains of temples of at least two different periods.

Cousens says that Mahmud appointed Mitha Khan as his governor at Somanatha and that it was he who completed the destruction of the temple and was eventually driven out by Bhima Deva I of Anahilavada Patan, who rebuilt the temple "possibly upon the site of the former," and there can surely be little doubt that the portions of an older basement, that we see in the heart of the present old building, are part of his temple.¹ But the appointment of Mitha Khan as the governor or deputy of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni at Somanatha is a mythical story versified by Shaikh Din in December 1801 and translated into English by Watson for the *Indian Antiquary*.² A careful study of Shaikh Din's ballad reveals several absurd anachronisms and it appears that the bard has hopelessly confused the name of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni with that of a later Muslim ruler of Kathiawar, perhaps Sultan Mahmud Begda (A.D. 1459-1511).

That the above-mentioned identifications of the site of the original temple of Somanatha are incorrect is evident from the accounts of Abi Raihan Al-Biruni who placed it at a distance of "a little less than three miles west of the mouth of the river Sarsuti (Sarasvati)."³ M. Nazim tried to identify the site of the temple with one lying at a distance

1 *List of Antiquarian Remains in the Bombay Presidency*, p. 182. *Somnath and other Mediaeval Temples in Kathiawad*, p. 22.

2 *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. VIII (for 1879), 153-61.

3 *Tahqiq ma li l'-Hind* of Al-Biruni (English translation by Sachau), Vol. II, p. 105.

of about 200 yards to the west of the temple of Bhidia and it will be interesting to quote him below:—

“I searched for the site of the original temple during my visit to Somanatha Patan and about 200 yards to the west of the temple of Bhidia, about three miles from the mouth of the river Saraswati, I found the remains of large blocks of stones joined together with a whitish cement, partly in sand and partly washed over by the sea at high tide. I believe that this was the place where stood the temple which Sultan Mahmud captured and burnt. Midway between this site and the temple of Bhidia, a *linga* has been placed in the sea in ancient times, probably to commemorate the original site.

“The whole sea-coast around this site is littered with ruins. Every now and then the sea washes away the sand and exposes some of them to view. When I was at Somanatha, the ruins of what looked like a cell were uncovered closely to Verawal. I am sure that if this site were excavated, some additional details regarding the size and plan of the temple might be brought to light.”¹

All these speculations are at an end. Recent excavations prove beyond doubt that the temple has stood on the same spot for over 1,500 years.

1 M. Nazim, *op. cit.*, pp. 213-14.

INSCRIPTIONS

STONE-INSCRIPTION IN THE TEMPLE OF BHADRAKALI AT PRABHASA PATAN OF THE TIME OF KING KUMARAPALA, dated VALABHI SAMVAT 850

Somanatha Patan is a small town under Junagadh on the south-west coast of Kathiawad. There is a temple dedicated to the Goddess Bhadrakali in this town in which this stone is to be found to the right of the entrance door.

It mentions the building and repairing of several temples of Shiva and Ambika as well as the digging of *Vao* and grants of land to learned Brahmanas by King Kumarapala through the influence of his religious preceptor, Bhava Brahaspati.

1. Bow to Shiva. May Shankara, the beloved of Bhavani, protect you, who, when thus addressed by his consort with anger “Because I allow the presence of Ganga in your *Jata*, you O cheat! cause her to play on your ears and by degrees you have brought her into your lap,” said, “O, best of women! this, the fame of Guru Ganda, is only as an ornament of my eyebrows.”

2. May Vighnaraja (*i.e.* Ganapati) be victorious, I bow to you; may you Saraswati favour me with the power of fresh diction that my tongue may flow on—as long as I work at the eulogy of the virtues of the good Ganda.

3. May the moon be victorious, who has been purified by Shankara, the consumer of the body of Kamadeva; and who, at the command of that God who bears her (the moon) on his crest; having herself propagated the creed, gave it to the intelligent followers of the Pashupata doctrine who had disappeared in the *Satya-yuga* by the curse of Parvati.

4. When some part of the *Kaliyuga* had elapsed, Shankara seeing the temple in a dilapidated state, ordered Nandishvara to repair it.

5. The omniscient Nandishvara took birth by the

order of Shiva in the house of the best of Brahmanas in the city of Varanasi in the beautiful country of Kanyakubja, where the gods reside and which is famous for its being the abode of *Dharma* (religion) and *Moksha* (final emancipation) and observed the vow of Pashupati.

6. He, the treasure of penances, set out to make pilgrimages, to initiate kings and to protect the places (of Pashupati).

7. Bhava Brihaspati, who was very learned, who was worshipped by the whole world, who had attained the title of being the *Upamana* (model, standard) of those who make various pilgrimages, whose body was like Nakulisha, who was worshipped by ascetics, who was like Kamadeva, and who was, as it were, all the *Shastras* put together elucidating his own *Agama*—he who was such, went to Dharapuri.

8. The intellect of Bhava Brihaspati appears most brilliant, in all the three worlds by the austerities he performed in the countries of Malva and Kanyakubja, and at Ujjain by his making the Paramars his disciples and well preserving the *Mathas* and by his acquiring the brotherly regard of Jaysimhadevaraja much pleased with him.

9. The day on which Bhava Brihaspati, the holy-minded, being reminded by Shambhu of the reason of his taking birth in this world, thought of repairing the temple, Siddharaja gave him the greatest honour as a preceptor with folded hands and performed his service with great devotion.

10. When that king went to heaven, Kumarapalaraja, splendid on account of his peculiar valour, ascended the throne,—he who was of unimaginable prowess, who was the lord of Ballaladesha and Dharanagari, and who was a lion, prowling on the heads of elephant-like kings of the wealthy city of Jangala.

11. When the fortunate Kumarapalaraja, who was like a *Kalpa* tree in the three worlds, was thus constantly reigning on the beautiful and successful throne, Ganda Bhava Brihaspati, seeing the temple of Shiva in a ruined state, asked the king to repair the temple of the god.

12. That Kumarapala made the fortunate Bhava Brihaspati—who caused to be built the great temple by the order of Shankara, who was respected by the four *Varnas* (castes), who was steady-minded and who was born in the Gargeya family—famous on the face of the earth as Gandeshvara, lord of all, on account of his being of the best *Gotramandala*.

13. He (Kumarapala) adorned him with ornaments with his own hands, put a necklace of pearls on his neck, besmeared his two feet with sandal-paste, bowed his head before him with reverence, gave him his own ring, setting aside his greatness, and made a gift of the place where the good old creed was followed and where food was daily distributed.

14. The king was much delighted to see the temple of Shankara made like the Mount Kailasa and said thus to the most intelligent blessed Ganda: “I now bestow this appellation of Ganda on you with your sons and grandsons till the moon, the stars and the sun endure.”

15. The temple of Ganda, the lord of all and the treasure of virtues, was caused to be made of gold by Somaraja, of silver by Krishna equal in valour to Ravana, and of large fine stones with numbers of gems set in them by Shri Bhimadeva; the same being dilapidated by time, was repaired and called Meru by the best and most glorious of kings.

16. Afterwards the king of Gujaratadesha, who was greatly satisfied, gave a village by name Brahmapuri, with its trees and water and all, in the presence of the whole assembly, with an order inscribed on three copper-plates, to

be enjoyed without any disturbance by the sons, grandsons, and descendants of his family.

17. Because this Ganda, who is like Brihaspati, rebuilt the temple by the support (management) of Soma, (it is clear) there has not been ever such a man, nor will there be in future.

18. This building, which was destroyed by the bad ministers of kings, who were *ganda* (mad) with evil genius, and were blind with avarice, is now repaired by Guru Ganda, in mere sport; as if to vie with the great Boar (*i.e.*, Vishnu in the incarnation of *Varaha*) who uplifted the earth on its tusks.

19. By him the powerful, what opponents were left unconquered in presence of the king? Whose faces were left unsullied? Whose pride was not humbled? Whose position was not forcibly shaken by planting his foot on their heads and what opponents were not turned beggars?

20. If this small pot of the Universe had not been well pressed on the outside by his good merits, it would have surely burst from within through his great glory contained in it.

21. Verily, Indra desiring to see his beauty assumes one thousand eyes; Brahma is obliged to bear four mouths being intent upon praising his immeasurable virtues; the earth being shaken by the weight of his greatness is kept in position by mountains and, in sooth, the three worlds seem to be created to hold his fame which the earth could not contain.

22. He, desirous of acquiring glory, renovated the four outward and four inward duties of the four *Varnas* and allotted one to each.

23. For the proper repair of the temple, having fixed limit, he worshipped five hundred and five good men.

24. He extended the town by building a strong fortress on the north and the south of the god (temple).

25. He placed gold-pinnacles (*lit.* jars) on the (temple of) Gauri, Bhimeshvara, Kapardi (Shiva), Siddheshvara and other divinities.

26. He made a court-room for the kings to assemble. For getting pure water for kitchen and bath, he made a *Vapi* of the Sarasvati.

27. He made a room in front of the (temple of) Shankara supported on beautiful strong pillars and a seat of Shiva in the form of a frog having a silver water-course.

28. He repaired the temple of God Papamochana, erected three statues of men¹ (?) there, and caused to be built a flight of steps in the river.

29. He built very large houses for Brahmanas and helped in the worship of Vishnu.

30. In the new town, on the way to Somanatha, he made two *Vapis* and there established another Chaudika.

31. This *Vapi*, which was caused to be made by Ganda, is pure, is of large dimensions, has sweet water and is named *Amrita*. This *Vapi*, whose water is being drunk by hundreds of brass-buckets which make pleasant rippling sound, seems to laugh at the ocean, though its water was drunk by the sage Agastya born from a *Kumbha* (an earthen water jar).

32. He, desirous as he was of acquiring religious merit, renewed the Chaudika near the God Shiva, who is adorned by the moon.

33. What person can rival this treasure of virtues, who, on (the days of) the solar and lunar eclipses, worshipped, at every step, learned and meritorious Brahmanas who came to him, after giving them all (kinds of) gifts,

1 Can it be, equal in height to three men?

and who pleased also the earth by making regular gifts, well-known on the surface of the earth, on the five holidays.

34. He is devoted to the enemy of Kamadeva (Shankara), takes delight in the knowledge of Brahma, has faith in the Shrutis, is very fond of charity, is of a forbearing nature, conducts (himself) properly and prays to Shankara for eternal bliss.

35. His wife, well-known in this world by the name of Mahadevi, had her face beautiful like the moon, was of a well-known family, was like Parvati to Shankara the enemy of the demon Tripura, and glorious as Lakshmi to Vishnu and was born of Sodhal, equalling in fame, speech and beauty the Ganga¹, Sarasvati and Yamuna respectively.

36. Her form was like the flower of *Champa*; her arms were like a chariot of Love; her eyes were like a row of *Sirisha* flowers;... her smile was like the flower of *Mogra* and her temples were like the full-blown flowers of *Lodhra*; so (it appeared that) her body was made by the artist Kamadeva, with beauties of all seasons.

37-38. He, who was like Dasharatha... had for his sons Siddhas (adepts) like his (Dasharatha's) four sons; the first of whom was called Aparaditya; next (to him) was Ratnaditya... the third was called Someshvara who was well-versed in all things; and the fourth was Bhaskara. They were as true and fraternally devoted to one another as Rama, etc.... the hands of (Vishnu) Shri Murari dipped in juice...

39-40. Fortunate indeed is the mother and also the father who is like a pinnacle of the world; he, till the end of his life and... Lakshmi (wealth), which is like drops of water rolling on leaves, and which abounds in horses, chariots, and elephants... of the flash of lightning... he, who was meritorious, acquired great fame.

1 i.e. Her fame was bright like the Ganga, etc.

41-42. Now, he was like king Shibi or the sage Dadhichi in the quality of goodness and was like Ravana in issuing strict orders... was like king Yudhishtira... what more can we say? He was like Brihaspati. All of them... the sister's son of Kumarapala, very strong.¹

43-45. Bhoja, son of Premalladevi... as Gandaraja officiated at the worship of Somanatha at the time of the eclipse of the moon, he was highly pleased... respectively.

46-47. Ganda,... near Papamochana on the bank of the river Hiranya gave... him, who was in advance of all the great lords, the kings.

48-50. He who gave a village by a deed of gift with order... to be enjoyed by sons, grandsons, and women born in the family as long as the sun and the moon (endure)... The *Shceghrakavi* composed this eulogy of Ganda's qualifications.

51. ...Rudrasuri, son of Lakshmidhara, wrote this... Vallabhi Samvat 850 Asha (dha)...

STONE INSCRIPTION AT VERAVAL UNDER BHIMA DEVA II OF JUNAGADH

(V. S. 1273—A. D. 1216)

1. May Someshvara bless you, who is like a *Kalpa* tree in the *Kaliyuga*, who is like the moon to the ocean of the excess of happiness consisting of supreme bliss, who is the sole cause of immortality: by whose volition the three worlds awake and sleep and who is the *rasayana* (elixir) to (preserve) the body of the moon.

2. May the rays of the nails of the reddish fingers, effulgent with high lustre and beauty, of the feet of Vishveshvara, appearing as if tossing about the beauty of a

1. Mahabala may be the name of the sister's son of king Kumarapala.

line of moons rising to destroy the deep darkness of the miseries of the world, destroy the whole of your delusion of this world.

3. O, Mother Sarasvati! Adorn this face of mine, which is beautiful like a full-blown lotus, as long as I describe the Upanishad of the life of Ganda, the lord of the universe, which destroys all sins.

4-5. The Trident-holder (*Pinakapani*=Shankara) seeing that religion was disappearing under bad kings in this *Kaliyuga* thought of reincarnating a part of himself as was arranged with the desire of repairing his abode, and took birth for the welfare of the world in the house of the best of Brahmanas in the beautiful country of Kanyakubja, who had destroyed his sins by offering oblations to the three sacred fires, and whose sorrows were ended by the reflection of the Vedic texts or by the Vedanta.

6-7. This Brahmana, who was descended from Shri Vishvanatha, who was a treasure of *Tapas* (austerities), who, when a child, had mastered the fourteen *Vidyas* without learning, by virtue of the residue of former births, and who was a disciple of the devotees in the *Matha* (monastery) of the god Mahakaladeva, went to Avanti to practise religious austerities.

8. This Brahmana passed many days or rather years in meditating hard, with his eyes closed a little, on his identity with the supreme imperishable principle, which is the cause of the *Gunas* in the form of the world, and which is eternal bliss.

9. Then from the hostile king-like milky ocean which was agitated when being churned by mount Mandarachala... became second Chanda. Which of the numerous lotus-like faces of the wives of kings in his army did not bear the beauty of full-blown lotuses when he was shining day and night?

10. Shankara, the bearer of the crescent moon on His head, the ornament of Avanti, thinking of the havoc caused by his false doctrines, gave correct instructions to king Kumarapala, with the desire of protecting his own city and to the ruler of the *Matha*.

11-12-13. A daughter by name Pratapadevi was born in the house of this preceptor of the gods, who was ever in search of her beloved who * * * in the (*sva*) *yamvara* was like the heavens without the moon, the lotus without the sun, Rati deserted by Kamadeva, Kamala (Lakshmi), the * * * preserved by the clouds. She, the daughter of Guru Ganda, the abode of all beauties and politeness * * * was like Sita, who came forth from the ground of sacrifice, whom, of a worthy family and the abode of all blessings centred in one place, the best of poets imagine variously to be a lotus-stalk in the lake of gracefulness, the wife of Shripati (Vishnu ?), infant Sarasvati (?) and * * * of Samararipu (Shankara).

14. The four sons of the preceptor of the Surapati were like oceans, the ornament of the earth and the abode of all wealth and fame. The eldest of them was Aparaditya and from him was Dharmaditya, a great misfortune to the desires of his foes.

15. His (son) was called Someshvaradeva, who well followed the path of religion and was untouched by sins. His younger brother was called Bhaskara, whose beauty humbled the pride of Kamadeva.

16. The Lords of Shri Kashi, the King of Malavadesha, Shri Siddharaja and other kings worshipped him with faith, believing him to be the champion of religion on earth. Shri Bhava Brihaspati, who was on this altar-like earth as bright and beautiful as fire, became with his four Veda-like sons a fit object of venerations, as Brahma.

17. Bhava Brihaspati established the gods (Brahma,

Vishnu, and Rudra) having three qualities or properties (*Satva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*) and caused to be made a flight of steps at (that part of) the bank of the *Dehotsarga*.

18. In the meantime that Shri Somanatha, the ornament of the three worlds, ordered an ascetic named Vishveshvararashi in a dream at the break of day.

19. O child! you, mightily illustrious as you are, are a part of me, born here to preserve your own abode, so you—who are powerful enough—will punish those who are hostile or whose conduct is against religion.

20. Meditating on what had happened at night, and being prayed to in the morning by the lord of the abode, he who was desirous of resuscitating this abode of the (god with the) moon, shone like the thousand-rayed sun.

21. He (*Vishveshvararashi*), who had like God Shiva lustre and *Kala*, who was as brilliant as the sun, and whose body was incomparably beautiful, took for his beloved wife Pratapadevi who was like the three *Shaktis* (*Prabhava*, *Mantra* and *Utsaha*).

22. When Kumarapala, the hero, went to heaven and enjoyed half the seat of Indra, Jayapala, the mere raising of whose eyebrows, was sufficient to destroy his enemies, became king.

23. [This *Shloka* (verse) is not quite clear, but the gist appears to be that] as he improved the state of Shri Soma to please the people of the place at the bold speech of King Jayapala, he was established by the king in the seat of Ganda as Gandatirtheshvara.

24. He, beautiful with the creeper-like necklace of the fine *Chaturjataka*, on obtaining the leadership, looked as fine as Pinaki (Shankara) seated on his bull and worshipped by Indra and other gods.

25-26. When this king, who was born from a small part of *kala* (of Shankara), who destroyed all difficulties by constantly worshipping Nandisha (Shiva) attained the eternal station (*Nijapada*), his son, King Mularaja, who knew religion and was famous, succeeded him. He also worshipped * * * who was worshipped by * * * .

27. By his prowess,—he, who was worshipped by the family of Chalukya, even a woman easily conquered king Hamira in a battle, who * * *

28. He (Mularaja) went to heaven even in youth as if he were desirous of (meeting) his father there. Then Bhimadeva became the self-elected husband of royalty.

29. He, who was like the crest-jewel in the diadems of kings, whose feet were adorned by the splendour of * * * who, by the flames of his prowess, was like a forest-conflagration to the cities of his enemies, who was very active and of wonderful power, bore the yoke of royalty.

30. * * * known as Jagadeva * * * who carefully assisted Bhimadeva with his boy-friends.

31. His two red-like hands, * * * (he) proved a moon to the lotus-like queen of Prithviraja (?).

32. By him also * * * the conqueror of the world (= was Indra on this earth) spread the worship of Vishnu.

33. He, who was wealthy, caused to be built a temple to Somanatha called Meghanada * * *

34. Having built a *Man(dapa)* * * *

35. Though just after attaining the royal seat he was busily engaged in thinking about the state affairs * * * often worshipped Shri Ganda Vishveshvara with great respect, who was the ornament of the Brahmanas and who was worthy of being worshipped * * * .

(The eight lines following are totally defaced and cannot be read.)

CINTRA PRASHASTI OF THE REIGN OF
SARANGADEVA (V. S. 1349).

A copy of the subjoined inscription was first published in Murphy's *Travel in Portugal* (1798) together with the translation of Sir Charles Wilkins. The plate was reproduced 10 years ago by Dr. Burgess in No. 9 of the *Memoranda of the Archaeological Survey of Western India* (B. B. 1879, p. 104) with the restoration of the Sanskrit text by the late Dr. Bhagavanlal Indraji. Dr. Bhagavanlal's text is generally correct and reflects the highest credit on his ingenuity, since the copy on which he worked is very inaccurate. Still I believe that a new edition will not be superfluous. The inscription is incised with great care and neatness on a long slab of polished stone measuring 42 inches by 20 and containing 66 lines. The stone is now preserved in the *Quinta of Don Joa De Castro at Cintra*, in Portugal, but as the contents of the inscription show, it originally belonged to a temple at Somanatha or Devapattana of Sorath.

The document is well preserved on the whole, but 4 syllables are gone in the middle of line 15, 4 to 12 syllables at the end of lines 23-28 and 2 to 5 in the first part of lines 49-52. Besides, a few single letters have been destroyed or become indistinct here and there. The alphabet is the common *Nagari* of the 13th century...

The language is not quite correct Sanskrit, and with the exception of two short sentences in the beginning and at the end, is throughout metrical. Towards the end, some Gujarati words and Gujaraticism appear.

The inscription contains Prashasti (Verse 75) composed in honour of the *Lingas* which a Shaiva ascetic called Tripurantaka, erected at Somanatha Pattana or Devapattam or Prabhasa, the famous Shaiva Tirtha in Sorath, now usually called Veraval.

The poem consists of:

St. 1 to 3: Mangala, preceded by a short prose invocation to Shiva.

First two verses are addressed to Shiva, the third to Ganesha.

This is followed by the genealogy of the Chalukya

kings of Gujarat, descendants of Vyaghrapalliya or Voghela branch founded by Dhavala.

Verse 4.—"The victorious and illustrious Vishvamalla, the head-jewel of princes, adorned (formerly) the Chalukya race, he, whose scimitar, though it had only two edges, his enemies (seeing it) from afar, regarded as (a thunderbolt) with a hundred edges."

Verse 5.—"This sole Lord of the world, a wonderful abode of courage, who all around uprooted with his arm, that is akin to the thunderbolt, the firmly rooted mountain-like kings, was called by his people King Narayana."

Verse 6.—"The glorious lord Vaidyanatha (Shiva) whose might destroys the misfortune of the torment of the world, placed in him, the ornament of the whole Kshatriya race, a portion of his self and he who had taken the vow of benefiting the universe, cured, as was proper, with his weapons even the big swellings of pride in the hearts of hostile kings."

Verse 7.—"His consort was Nalladevi, who claved to his body just as the glory of victory; through her that king was exceedingly resplendent, like the god bearing the deer-mark (the moon) through his brilliant light."

Verse 8.—"That king, the prowess of whose arm took rest (only when it reached) the boundaries of the quarters of the horizon, whose younger brother was Pratapamalla, enjoyed the earth which, owing to the excess of his taste for wonderful bravery, was overshadowed by a single parasol."

Verse 9.—"After the illustrious Vishvamalla had anointed Arjuna, the son of Pratapamalla, to be his successor, he enjoyed (in heaven) banquets of ambrosia and the nectar of the lips of the celestial maidens."

Verse 10.—"That crest-jewel of princes, His Majesty Arjuna, who was lovely on account of the virtues resplen-

dent like the rays of the full moon, and who, an incarnation, as it were, of a portion of Damodara, gained great glory through his valour, drew riches from the earth, as if it were the cow of plenty.”

Verse 11.—“After that guiltless man, an incarnation of Krishna, had grasped, in order to punish the wicked the circle of the earth with his hand, that by its liberality surpassed the tree of paradise, he indeed protected his subjects through his noble deeds.”

Verse 12.—“Victorious is the issue of his body, His Majesty Saranga, whose heart is immersed in the happiness produced by his amorous dalliance with the fortune of the Gurjara kingdom, who is passionately addicted to the sport of rescuing the earth and who possessed a dignity (equal to that) of Sharangdhara.”

Verse 13.—“Through his power, he, in battle, reduced the powers of the Yadava and the Malava lords just as the lord of birds formerly (overcame) the hinge-bodied elephant and the tortoise.”

The next portion of the inscription, verses 14-39, is devoted to a description of the spiritual family of Tripurantaka, the benefactor of the Tirtha of Somanatha, and to an account of his virtues and his adventures. The section is introduced, as is often done in the late inscriptions and poems of Gujarat, by the words *itashcha* ‘and now’ and its opening verses run as follows:—

Verse 14.—“The God who wears the infant moon on his head, and who grants rewards for the multitude of performances of austerities himself, became incarnate in the form of Bhattaraka Shri Lakulisha in order to bestow favour on the universe.”

Verse 15.—“And in order to favour the offspring of Uluka, who, long was deprived of sons in consequence of a curse of their father, he came to and dwelt at Karshana,

the forehead, as it were, of the earth, an ornament of the Lata country.” (The poet meant to say ‘an ornament of the Lata country which latter resembles the forehead *lalata* of the earth.’)

Verse 16.—“In this (place) appeared, in order to fulfil particular Pashupata vows, four pupils of his, called Kushika, Gargya, Kaurasha and Maitreya.”

Verse 17.—“Afterwards the race of these ascetics, which grew up in four (branches) adorned the earth that is bounded by the four oceans.”

Verse 18.—“Through the succession of the high-minded men who were favoured by those (four) arose the glorious... ka possessing boundless wealth.”

Verse 19.—“An ablest (*Sthanadhipa*), called Karttikarashi, who resembled a conglomerate (*rashi*) of austerities in (human) shape and who took away the sins of his (spiritual) dependants by merely looking at them, became an ornament of Gargya’s line.”

Verse 20.—“(Next) arose compassionate Valmiki-rashi, who owed his spiritual birth to the favour of that (Karttikarashi’s) lotus-hands, and who hallowed speech by the arrangement of his words and the road to the sanctuaries by the marks of his steps, which (arrangement of marks) were pure like his mind (*i.e.* he preached well and performed many pilgrimages).”

Verse 21.—“He graciously appointed a young ascetic, called *Tripurantaka* who sanctified the four quarters of the horizon in consequence of his desire to visit other sacred places.”

These verses make us acquainted with three teachers of the Gargya branch of the *Lakulisha Pashupatas*, who apparently were in succession, abbots or spiritual directors at some sacred place or of some *matha* in Gujarat (*sthana* has both the meanings); possibly the place where they re-

sided may have been *Karshana*. But this is not certain, for the last four syllables in *verse* 8 may have contained some other geographical name, and the sense of the verse may be that a *matha* or sanctuary was established there by the spiritual descendants of the four pupils of *Lakulisha* (the use of the verb equivalent to *abhut* for 'was made' is not uncommon in the modern Indian vernaculars, and it is not impossible that our poet has fallen into a Gujaraticism). But, in any case, it is indisputable that *Karshana* in Lata or Central Gujarat was the head establishment of these Shaivas because Shiva is said to have become incarnate there as *Lakulisha*. *Karshana* is, it would seem, the modern *Karvan* on the Miyagam-Dabhoi railway; this village was, according to its *mahatmya*, formerly called *Kayavirohana* or *Kayarahun* (*Kayarohana* ?) and was, according to tradition, the place where Mahadeva, who had been born as *Nakuleshvara* in the family of a Brahmana of *Ulkapuri* or *Avakhal*, reassumed his divine shape (cf. BB Gazetteer, Vol. VII, pp. 19-20 and pp. 550-51). *Ulkapuri* is possibly a mistake for *Ulukapuri* and *mahatmya* may still contain a dim reminiscence of the myth narrated in verse 14. (The Gazetteer gives the names of Shiva as *Nekleshvar* or *Nakleshvar*, corruptions of the form *Nakuleshvara*.)

It is "one of the four oldest and most famous seats of the worship of Shiva" and is situated in the district which used to be called Lata. The words *Lakulisha* and *Nakulisha* are two vicarious forms of which the former is possibly the older one [reasons for considering *Lakulisha* as the older form are (1) that the change of *la* to *na* is more common than that of *na* to *la*; (2) *Lakulisha* can be easily explained as a compound of *lakulinil lakulina* and *isha* i.e., the Lord wearing the staff (i.e. the *khatvanga*), though the latter one is that commonly used in Sanskrit literature].

The doctrines of the Nakulisha Pashupatas are explained at length in Sayana's *Sarvadarshanasangraha* (p. 108, Cowell & Gough), but nothing is known regarding their history. It is, therefore, very interesting to learn that in the 13th century A.D., Gujarat was considered to be the country where the sect arose and that Karshana — Karvan—claimed the honour of being the place where its founder was born and where his school was divided into four branches.

As regards the antiquity of the sect, nothing is stated in the inscription.

Kartikarashi, the first historical head of these Pashupatas, cannot have succeeded to his office much before the year A.D. 1225 since the third was alive in 1287.

The next three verses are not important and most of them are badly mutilated.

Verses 23-34.—“Tripurantaka's pilgrimage was directed to the Himalayas where he visited Kedara i.e. Kedarnath in Garhwal and there worshipped Shiva with lotuses taken from the pure *Brahmasaras*. Thence he turned southwards and bathed at Prayaga, modern Allahabad at the confluence of the Ganga and the Yamuna (*verse 26*). From Allahabad he wandered to the Shriparvata (*verse 27*) which he circumambulated in the orthodox fashion, and where he was blessed by the aspect of divine Mallinatha. The mountain seems not to be identical with the Southern Shriparvata. Shrishaila must lie south of Allahabad and north of the Narmada.

The next verse (28) informs us that Tripurantaka afterwards bathed in the “waters of the Reva which are tossing among the rocks of the Vindhya mountains that are hallowed by the traces of Agastya's footsteps.”

From the Narmada he turned to the Godavari (*verse 29*) and visited Tryambaka, i.e. Trimbak near Nasik. Still

continuing to travel southwards, the pilgrim reached Rameshvaram and the bridge of Rama (*verse 30*). Finally he returned to the north-west and came to Devapattana or Prabhasa, where the river Sarasvati flows into the ocean (*verses 31-33*).

There he received high honours from the chief temple priest (*verse 34*). Here the illustrious temple priest (Ganda) Brihaspati, who is visibly the husband of Uma (this phrase has a double sense. It means that the name of Brihaspati's wife was Uma and that he was an incarnation of Shiva) made him an Arya and appointed him as sixth Mahattara.

Verse 35.—“The *Chaturjalaka* (this must be the title of a high local official) who was pleased with his virtues, rejoiced thinking ‘The Mahattara will restore the sacred place by his pure actions.’”

What these honours conferred on Tripurantaka exactly were, whether Arya and Mahattara refer to offices or were, what is more probable, mere titles, I am unable to determine. I must content myself pointing out that according to verse 9 of the *Somanathapattan Prashasti*, Bhava Brihaspati received the same honours from king Jayasimha Siddharaja. The *Ganda Brihaspati*, who honoured Tripurantaka, is, of course, not as Dr. Bhagavanlal suggests, the *Ganda Bhava Brihaspati*, who was the contemporary of Jayasimha and of Kumarapala. For these two kings reigned between Vikrama Samvat 1150 and 1229 while the date of our inscription is more than a hundred years later. Moreover, the two Brihaspatis are clearly distinguished from each other by the statements regarding their wives. Bhava Brihaspati was married, according to verse 35 of the *Somanathapattan Prashasti*, to Mahadevi, daughter of Sodhala and our Brihaspati to Uma (*below verse 43*). The name *Brihaspati* must, there-

fore, have been borne by more than one priest in charge of the temple of Somanatha at Devapattana or Prabhasa.

The honours which Tripurantaka received induced him to realise the hopes of the *Chaturjataka* and to spend considerable sums on the *Tirtha*.

The following verses (40-46) inform us that he

- (1) built 5 temples,
- (2) dedicated 5 statues,
- (3) erected a *Torana* (a sort of triumphal arch) supported by 2 pillars.

The five temples situated (*verse* 40) to the north of the *Mandapa* or hall of the temple of Someshvara, close to the splendid old water-clock [*Ghatikalaya*, modern Gujarati *ghadial*, any kind of time-piece; and on the site '*vasam adhithitani*'=standing on the dwelling of'; may mean either that the five temples were built on the site of an ancient decayed temple or that the site was sacred to the god mentioned. *Vasa*=means 'the precincts of a sacred building.' Shrikanta Panchamukh *i.e.* five-headed Shiva, sur-named Shrikanta]. The first of these temples (*verse* 41) was built for the welfare of Tripurantaka's mother Mahana and called *Mahaneshrara*. The second (*verse* 42) was dedicated to Umapati and erected in the name of the priest *Brihaspati*, who was the husband of Uma. The third called Umeshvara (*verse* 43) was built for the welfare of the priest's wife. The remaining two, a *Tripurantakeshvara* and a *Rameshvara*, were named after the founder and his wife. The five statues (*verse* 44) (the word statue does not occur in the text but implies it; *Antarala* is the 2nd *Mandapa* of a temple between the *Ardhamandapa* and the shrine), a *Gorakshaka* (Gorakhnath), a *Bhairava*, an *Anjaneya* (Hanuman), a *Sarasvati* and a *Siddhi Vinayaka* (Ganesha) were placed in the *Antaralas* of the five temples. The *torana* finally was erected on the space (*bhuparisari*)

before the north gate of these (five temples). This statement indicates that the temples were surrounded by a wall, and that the arch adorned the principal entry into the enclosure, which had to be made on the north side, as the great temple of Someshvara lay to the south and east, and to the west the sea. The remaining portion of the inscription (*verses 47 to 72*) mentions the benefaction which Tripurantaka made in order to provide for the service of the temple and rules regarding the worship. This section offers considerable difficulties because the rules regarding the worship are awkwardly arranged and obscure.

The only chance of clearing up all the difficulties would be enquiries on the spot among the priests of Somanatha and other Shaiva establishments in Kathiawar and Gujarat.

The enumeration of the benefaction and the rules runs as follows:—

Verse 47.—“In order to cleanse the gods daily—two *kavidas* of water and a broom of *Zizyphus Jujuba* [*Kolini* = *kolamayī* = made of kola (*Zizyphus Jujuba*)] for sweeping the buildings [*Jagati* = *Vastu* (given for the word in the *Vaijayanti* of *Yadava-prakasha*)] .

Verse 48.—“Both these things must be procured (and used) by a particularly clever pupil (*batuka*) in return for the use of *naivedya* food (offerings destined for the meals of deities which are invariably made over to the temple servants) and of the money (allotted) for his monthly expenses regarding the allowances for the *chela*” (see *verse 61*).

Verse 49.—“He (Tripurantaka) who was purified by his natural inclination for giving gold, presented, out of kindness towards the town of the god who bears the crescent of the moon on his head, every month 8 *drammas* for

(the purchase of) sandal-wood in the *maparaka*'' (meaning unintelligible).

Verse 50.—''The guild of the gardeners shall furnish daily two hundred white roses (*Shatapattra*) and two thousand fragrant oleander blossoms'' (*Kanavira* prakrit and vernacular form of *karavira*).

Verse 51.—''He assigned in the *Parikshipatta* six *drammas* for the monthly expenditure in order to procure ... a pure *vedika*'' (Incomplete.)

Verse 52.—''Two *nanakas* of husked rice [(*chosha*) = Gujarati *chokha*] and one *manaka* of phaseolus mingo (*mudga*), four *karshas* (*karsho*=2 tolas; hence=8 tolas; at present tola=110-180 grains locally) of clarified butter and as much oil for the lamps. (The lamps are required for *Aratrika* in the morning and evening.)

''Five betel-nuts of good quality (all this) was provided by that constant man, a judge of the merits of others, daily in the store-house.'' (Couplet.)

(The translation of *Sthitaka* is left out as it is not found in the dictionaries.)

Verse 54.—''He, who is attached to the performance of meritorious works, caused to be provided even here (i.e. in the store house), every month, two *manas* (maunds=40 seers) of fragrant gum (*Guggula*) for the time of offering incense.''

Verse 55.—''The *Mehara* (a watchman connected with *Tripurantaka*'s temples and receiving some allowance from him) shall give daily fifty leaves of betel pepper for the preparation of *bitakas*.'' (Pan-Supari: triangular shaped parcel of arecanut, lime etc., wrapped in a betel leaf and held together by a clove stuck into the leaf.)

Verse 56.—''That which thus has been provided for the offering in the sacred place (the temples) must be fetched by *Pashupala* (=herdsman: but here the title of a

Shaiva priest; a worshipper of Pashupati) from the store house of glorious (Somanatha): [if the restoration of Somanatha is correct, then the store house mentioned above in verse 53 is that of the great Temple] and be given (by him) to the person performing the worship."

Verse 57.—“One *manaka* of rice (*choshā*) and two *Pallikas* (a small measure) of *Phaseolus mingo*, as well as two Karshas of clarified butter and so forth must be daily given (by the keeper of the store house) to the *Pashupala* for offering.” (The materials were, of course, intended for the daily *Naiṛedya* of the five gods.)

Verse 58.—“(Even this) must be daily given for the *Naiṛedya* offering; then that food must be carefully cooked by the pupil (*batuka*).”

Verse 59.—“After performing the declaration of purpose (*Sankalpya*) the *Pashupala* must give that *Naiṛedya* and the *bitakas* to the pupil who performs (the worship).”

Verse 60.—“He (Tripurantaka), the most excellent of the virtuous, caused one *dramma* to be assigned daily (from the revenue) in the custom-house (*mandapika*) by an edict (*Shashana*) of the *Chaturjataka*.”

[Tripurantaka paid money in order to secure this grant and that mentioned in the next verse: Verse 71 declares that he purchased the *Shashana* with his pure self-acquired wealth.]

Verse 61.—“Even these (from the revenue in the custom-house) this noble-minded man caused nine *drammas* to be assigned (monthly) for the maintenance of the pupil (*batuka*, who serves the temples).”

Verse 62.—“Fifteen *drammas* must be given every month to the *Pashupala*, who comes to perform incomparable worship (according to the law).”

Verse 63.—“For this purpose he (Tripurantaka) placed every month fifteen *drammas* in the treasury of the

worshipful *Chaturjataka*'' (Original *Sammilitapottake*: The author has taken *pottaka*—adaptation of the Persian *Fotah*, which occurs in Gujarati as *potum* and means 'the total of village taxes'; hence the word—the place where the village taxes are collected i.e., the treasury. In Marathi *poteni*=Treasury.)

Verse 64.—''Rejoicing in his heart, he purchased for money from the worshipful *Chaturjataka* three excellent shops and presented (them as an endowment for his temples).''

Verse 65.—''The best among these, the illustrious *Chaturjataka*, who wears the garland of faith in god Shiva, made over to the gardeners in exchange for their daily furnishing the quantity of flowers (required) for the worship.'' (This was apparently the remuneration for which the guild of the gardeners furnished the flowers.)

Verse 66.—''The merchants too (*mahajanah*=merchants; in Gujarati too *mahajana* means the same) assigned from each shop one *dramma* in order to provide the *pavitraka* and the *vistarana* at the festivals on the full-moon days of Chaitra and Bhadrapada'' (*Visheshasthitake* left out).

Verse 67.—''At the Shivaratri (festival) the betelnuts for the *bitaka* of the *Chaturjataka* must be furnished by the store house (of the temple of Somanatha) and the leaves by the Mehara.'' (It is customary to offer *pan-supari* to officials or heads of towns and villages on the occasion of great festivals.)

Verse 68.—''Three pure-minded shop-keepers must always personally provide garlands, coconuts and pairs of soft garments in the three royal processions of the glorious Lord Somanatha.''

(In this verse *Yugah* is translated as 'pairs of garlands' but it is conjectural. On such occasion as

Shivaratri, it is quite usual to adorn the streets with cloth.)

Verse 69.—“After the *Pashupalaka* has first worshipped these five temples according to the manner (prescribed) for (the worship of) divine Someshvara, he shall afterwards ascend the stairs (leading to the temple) of the glorious deity.” (This rule refers to *Shivaratri*.)

Verse 70.—“He (Tripurantaka) gave to the worshipful *Chaturjataka* a *dharmasthana*” (land or money assigned for a religious purpose: Cf. *Devasthana*).

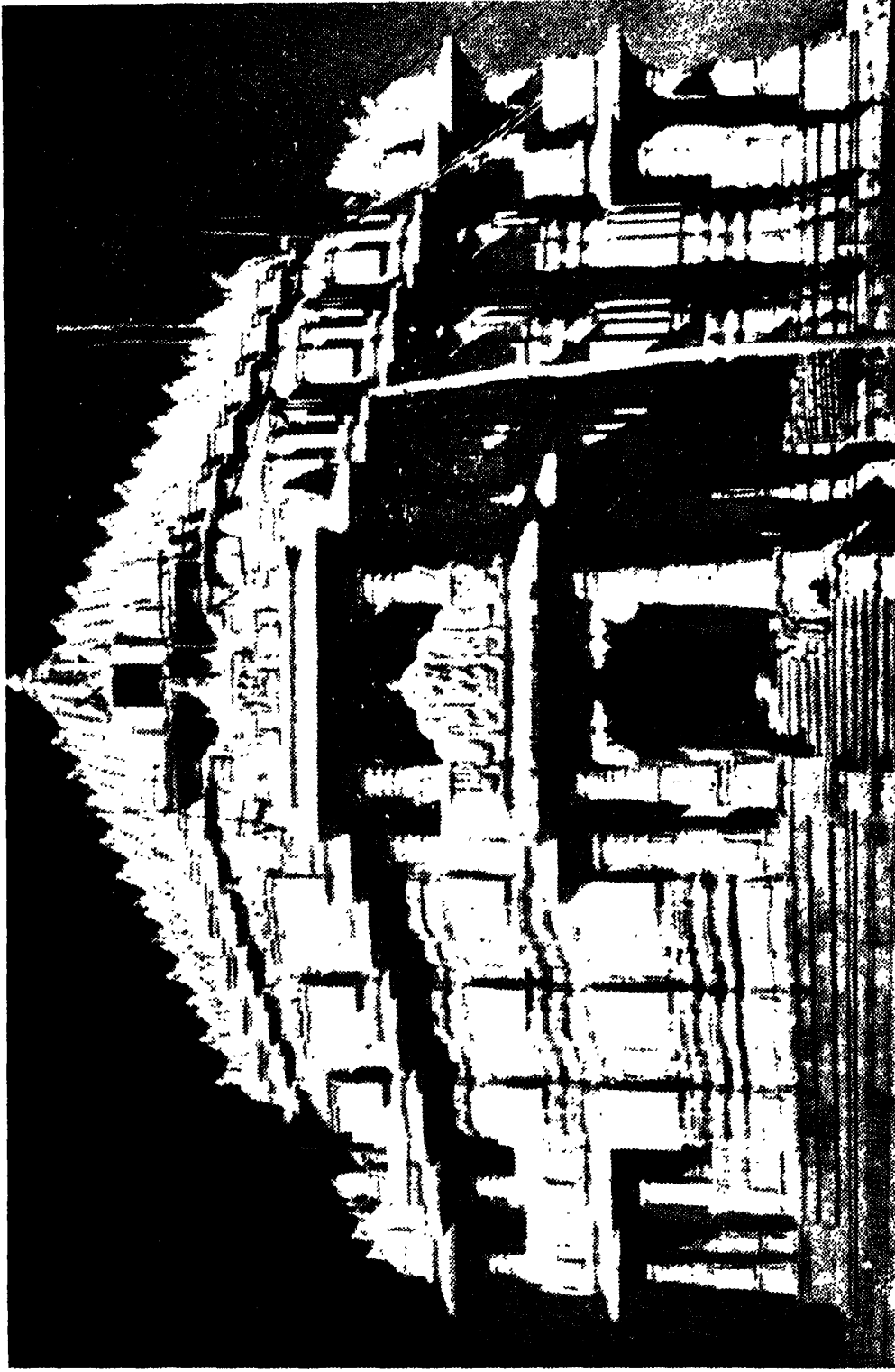
Verse 71.—“As he procured this *Dharmasthana* and this grant (*Shashana* mentioned above) with pure self-acquired property, the banner of his fame which is connected with his temples, glitters brilliantly white like the full moon.”

Verse 72.—“In the middle of the temple, which is a monument of the fame of illustrious priest (Ganda) Ranaka Brihaspati and an ornament to the bank of king Saranga’s Lake, he has caused to be built a chapel of his own particular god, a pleasure house of Shri.”

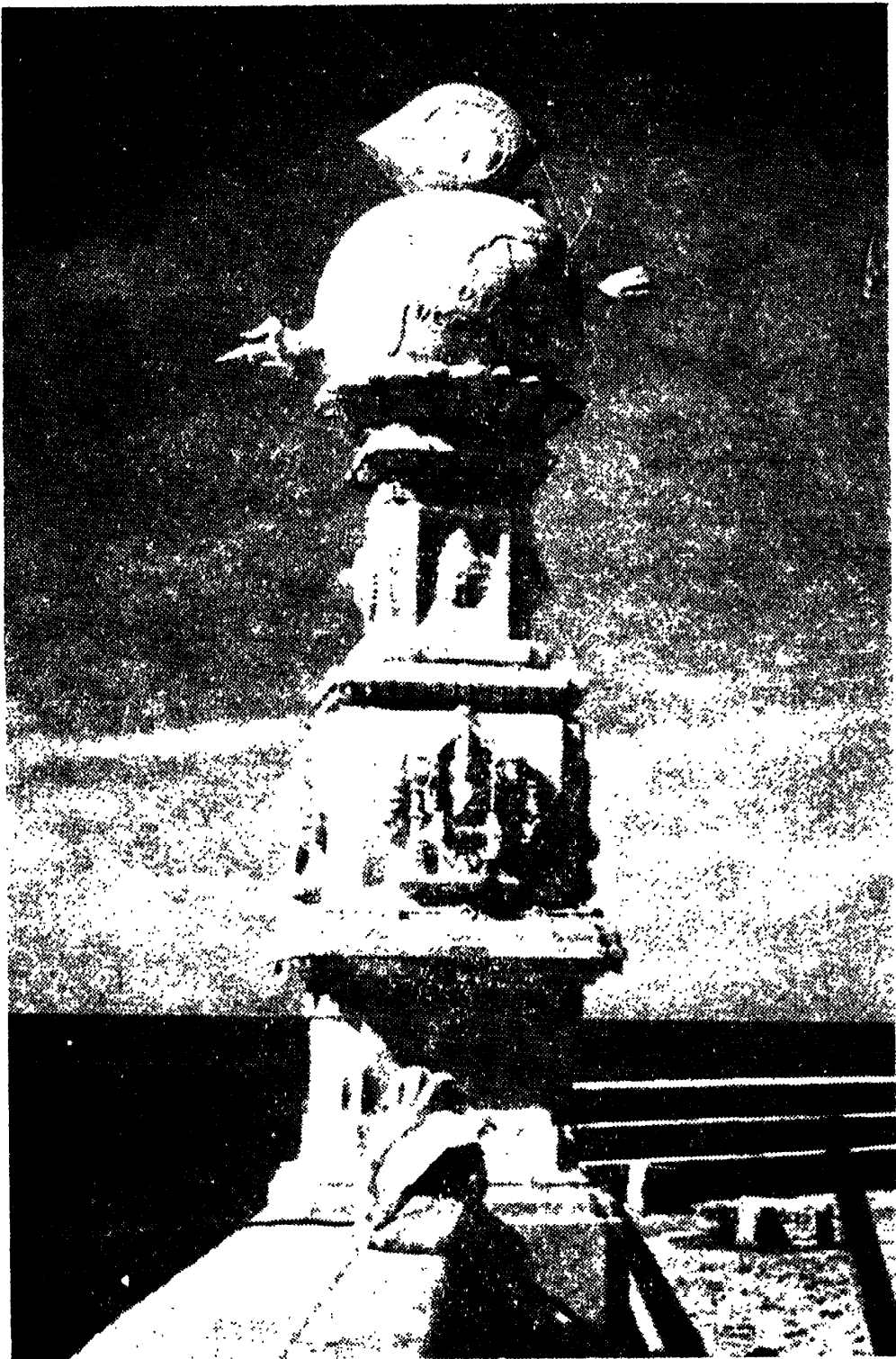
Verses 73-74.—Contain a general eulogy of Tripurantaka and verse 75 mentions that Dharanidhara, son of Dhandha, was the author of our *Prashasti*.

Verse 76.—Declares that the manuscript of the poem was written by the councillor (*Mantrin*) Vikrama, the son of Purnasimha, and that it was incised by the artist (*Shilpin*) i.e. the mason Purnasiha, the son of Nahada.

According to the Colophon, the consecration of the five *Lingas* took place on Monday, the fifth lunar day of the bright half of Magha, Vikrama Samvat 1343, or according to Dr. Schram’s calculation, on January 20, 1287, which was a Monday. This date is not of any great historical importance as Saranga ruled for 20 or 22 years until A.D. 1296-97.



A view of the New Temple.



The light-path stretching without obstruction up to the South Pole over the end of the ocean (New Temple).



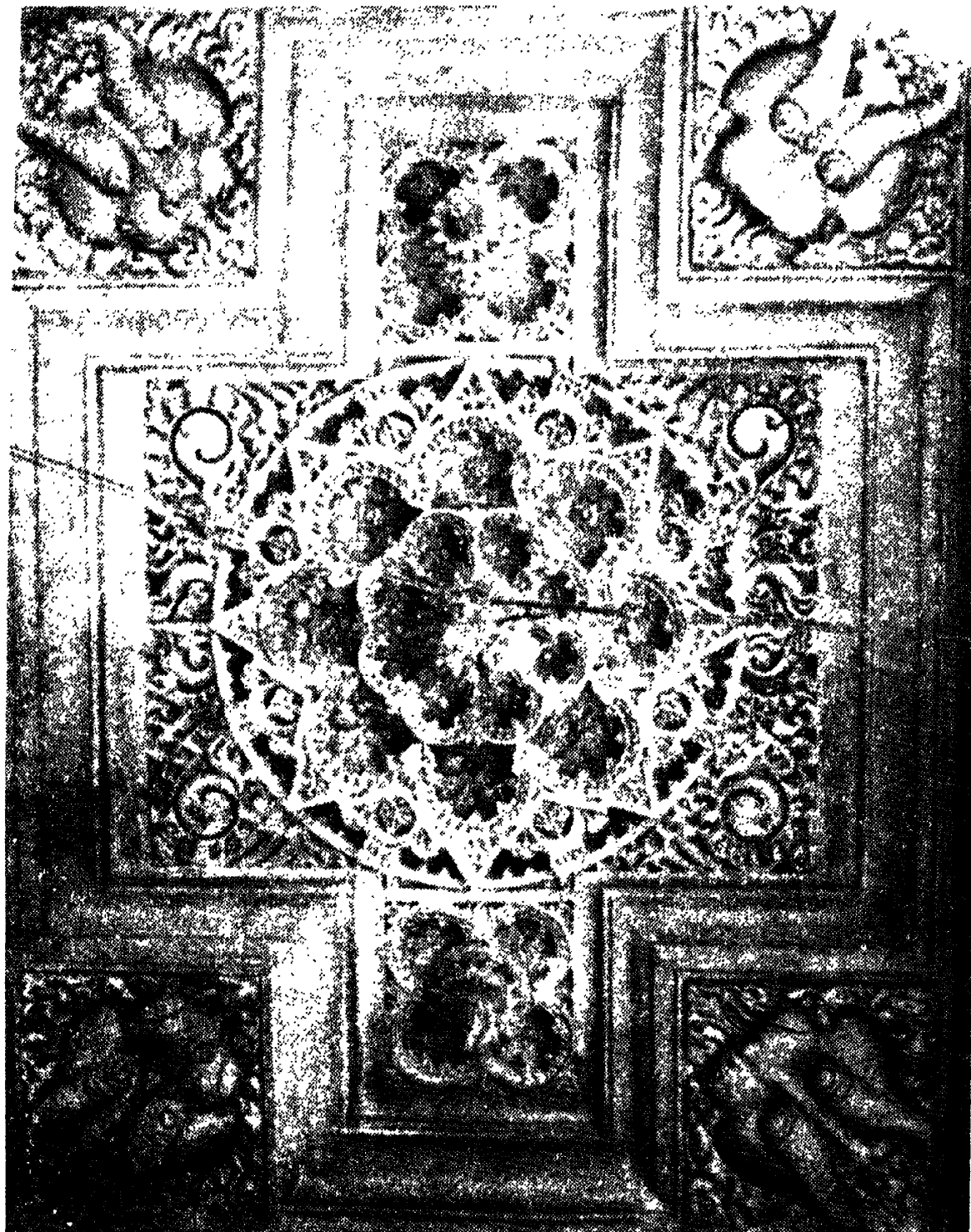
Image of Nataraja in the New Temple.



Goddess Parvati in different postures (New Temple).

'Ravana lifting Kailasa' in the ceiling of eastern entrance (New Temple).





Carving in the ceiling of northern and southern entrances (New Temple).

APPENDIX

[From "*Munshi, His Art and Work*", Vol. IV, published
by Shri K. M. Munshi 70th Birthday Citizens'
Celebrations Committee]

SOMANATHA RISES AGAIN

The restoration of the hoary temple of Somanatha which contains the first of the twelve *jjotirlingas* was an act of historic justice that warmed the heart of the nation. And it was because of Munshi's indefatigable efforts that the shrine of Somanatha rose again like the phoenix from its ashes.

The sack of Somanatha by Mahmud Ghazni had left a deep wound in the nation's soul and it hung like a stalactite in the cave of Indian memory. It was but natural that a sensitive person like Munshi should have felt the wound deeply. He has confessed that when he first read Brigg's *Cities of Gujarat*, the wound bled profusely and he gave expression to his distress in an article entitled *Gujarat, the Grave of Vanished Empires* which was published in the Baroda College magazine.

Later when he came to Bombay, Munshi studied all the available material about the sack of Somanatha and wrote two articles on the subject which were published in the *East and West*, then a leading monthly of Bombay. Between 1915 and 1922, Munshi wrote his famous historical trilogy in Gujarati in which he resurrected the glories of Chalukyan Gujarat. He felt that a nation which did not take pride in its past could have no future and it was his aim, through his novels, to recapture the glory and the grandeur that was Gujarat.

It was only in December 1922 that Munshi could visit Somanatha for the first time. He has put down his impressions of his visit: "Desecrated, burnt and battered, it still stood firm—a monument to our humiliation and ingratitude. I can scarcely describe the burning shame which I felt on that early morning as I walked the broken floor of the once-hallowed *sabhamantap* littered with broken pil-

lars and scattered stones. Lizards slipped in and out of their holes at the sound of my unfamiliar steps, and—Oh! the shame of it—an inspector's horse, tied there, neighed at my approach with sacrilegious impertinence."

The dreamer in Munshi saw the temple as it was in 1024, its spire rising to the sky, mighty *acharyas* and kings laying their heads in humility at the door-step of the sanctum. He heard the jingling anklets of the temple dancers as they sang to the joyous rhythm of drum beats. He saw vast crowds anxious to have *darshan* of the deity, hope in their hearts and humility in their souls. And he also saw the invader, his sword gory with the blood of innocent worshippers, break the image into three parts. It was out of this dream that came his most famous novel *Jaya Somanatha*, most of which was written in Pahalgam in Kashmir with the Shishnaga dancing from stone to stone with endless exuberance in front of him.

The reconstruction of Somanatha was then only a nebulous dream of a visionary. But events were moving fast and in 1947 the Britishers decided to quit the country which however had to be partitioned before they left. Apart from partition, the Indian States were freed from the bonds of paramountcy. It looked as though India was to be Balkanised. But the collective will of the people was bent on consolidating the country and this will had its potent expression and mighty instrument in Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

The Muslim rulers of Indian States had their own dreams. Irrespective of what their people thought, their eyes were turned to Pakistan. One of them was the dog-loving Nawab of Junagadh, in whose State was situated the thrice-sacred shrine of Somanatha. The State had no contiguity with Pakistan by land. Over 80 per cent of the people were Hindus. Junagadh was an economic and administrative unit embedded in and deriving its sustenance from Kathiawar. Junagadh had been the home of Ra Khengar and his queen Ranak Devi—symbols of heroism enshrined in song and story in Western India.

On the eve of the transfer of power, the people of India were shocked to learn that the Nawab of Junagadh had acceded to Pakistan. A mighty wave of indignation

surged not only over the people of Junagadh, but of the whole of India. The Kathiawar Political Conference took up the challenge. The people of Junagadh took the historical step of establishing a parallel Government. The *Arzi Hukumat* or the Provisional Government of Free Junagadh, with Samaldas Gandhi at the head, was announced at a public meeting in Bombay. Munshi was in close touch with the situation and his advice was eagerly sought by the leaders of Junagadh. He drafted the Proclamation explaining how the Nawab had forfeited his claim to the allegiance of his subjects and announced the Constitution of a Provisional Government. Lord Mountbatten, the Governor-General and his advisers considered it an "ably written" document.

The Provisional Government of Junagadh moved to Saurashtra and took possession of the Junagadh House at Rajkot. Young men from all over Saurashtra flocked to its banner of freedom. Money flowed in, volunteers were armed and trained. On the Dussehra Day, the 'Day of Victory'—October 24, 1947—the volunteers of the Provisional Government began their operations. People rose against the Nawab's rule.

Several parts of the State fell into the hands of the Provisional Government. When the Nawab heard of it, he fled to Pakistan with his jewels, many of his wives and his dogs, leaving Sir Shah Nawaz Bhutto, his Dewan, a resident of Pakistan, to run the Government as best as he could. The volunteer-army of freedom advanced rapidly and was welcomed everywhere with enthusiasm.

It was indeed a difficult and delicate task that confronted Munshi. Lord Mountbatten, the Governor-General, was for following a cautious policy with regard to Junagadh. The people of the country in general and of Gujarat and Kathiawar in particular, were excited. In fact, the situation in Kathiawar was highly explosive and none of the leaders were in a position to hold the people in leash for long. Munshi enjoyed the confidence of Sardar who was the Minister for States. The full story of the strenuous efforts he made in regard to the Junagadh affair has not yet been told.

With the flight of the Nawab, conditions in Junagadh

went from bad to worse. Sir Shah Nawaz Bhutto knew that he could not carry on the administration and wrote a letter to the Regional Commissioner of the Government of India at Rajkot asking him to take over the administration of the State.

In fact, Munshi was sitting with the Sardar at his house in New Delhi at night when a telephone message was received from the Regional Commissioner that Sir Shah Nawaz Bhutto had invited the Indian Army into Junagadh. When Sardar conveyed the news to Munshi, he gave expression to his joy with the words “So it is *Jaya Somanatha*”.

The Indian army entered Junagadh and took over the administration on the 9th November, 1947. Four days later, Sardar Patel visited Junagadh. From Junagadh he went to Prabhas Patan and visited the temple. He was visibly moved at the sight of the famous temple which was the glory of India, looking so dilapidated, neglected and forlorn. N. V. Gadgil, who accompanied Sardar, suggested that the Government of India should rebuild the temple. Sardar asked him to go ahead. The Jam Saheb of Nawalnagar announced a donation of one lakh of rupees and Samaldas Gandhi on behalf of *Arzi Hukumat* donated Rs. 51,000. The proposal as well as the donations were clearly spontaneous. At a huge public meeting held at the Ahalya Bai Temple, Sardar announced: “On this auspicious day of the New Year, we have decided that Somanatha should be reconstructed. You, people of Saurashtra, should do your best. This is a holy task in which all should participate.”

Munshi was associated with the reconstruction scheme from the very beginning. In fact Sardar relied on him to translate the idea into reality. But he had to meet with opposition from unexpected quarters.

In the beginning, some persons, more fond of dead stones than live values, pressed the point of view that the ruins of the old temple should be maintained as an ancient monument. Munshi was, however, firm in his opinion, that the temple of Somanatha was not just an ancient monument; it lived in the sentiments of the whole nation and its reconstruction was a national pledge. Its preservation was

not a mere matter of historical curiosity.

Some of his scholar friends had hard things to say about Munshi for his 'vandalism'. They forgot that while he is fond of history, he is fonder still of creative values.

When the question was pressed by the Archaeological Department, Sardar expressed his views as follows: "The Hindu sentiment in regard to this temple is both strong and widespread. In the present conditions, it is unlikely that that sentiment will be satisfied by mere restoration of the temple or by prolonging its life. The restoration of the idol would be a point of honour and sentiment with the Hindu Public."

At that stage it was considered that the re-installation of the idol would not interfere with the maintenance of the old temple. The specialists, on scrutiny, found that the ruins were salt-eaten and irreparable; nor could they stand a spire. Religious injunctions also stood in the way of installing the deity in ruins which could not be renovated as prescribed. It was, therefore, finally decided to rebuild the temple.

On December 13, 1947, the Standing Committee of the Ministry of Works, Mines and Power of the Government of India approved of the idea and Gadgil instructed his Consulting Architect to visit Prabhas Patan. Though the Government of India sponsored the scheme, Sardar under the advice of Gandhi decided that the Government should not make any contribution in the form of money for the reconstruction of the temple.

On December 25, 1947, the States Ministry decided to request the Junagadh authorities to lease a sufficiently large area around the temple for development on these lines.

On January 23, 1949, a conference was held at Jamnagar attended by Sardar and Gadgil with the Jam Saheb of Nawanagar, U.N. Dhebar, Chief Minister of Saurashtra, and Samaldas Gandhi, Administrator of Junagadh. The trust, it was then decided, was to consist of two representatives of donors; two eminent public men; two representatives of the Government of India; and two representatives of the Government of Saurashtra (of whom one would be from Junagadh).

The Board of Trustees were to be assisted by an Advisory Committee, the composition of which was to be settled by the Government of India. The objects of the Trust were to include 'not only the rebuilding and the maintenance of the Somanatha Temple itself and its auxiliary institutions, the renovation of Dehotsarga where Lord Shri Krishna cast off His mortal coils, but also the general improvement of the neighbourhood so as to restore its atmosphere of sanctity.' Munshi was requested to prepare the Trust Deed.

Munshi's view was that a temple by itself would not be enough in these days of cultural resurgence, nor did the authoritative tradition of a great temple permit its dissociation from a centre of learning. If the temple was to be a real centre of attraction for the country, it should have close association with an All-India Sanskrit University and should also have a suburb where people could come either for health, study or for rest, and a *Goshala*.

Munshi elaborated these ideas in an exhaustive note which he submitted to Sardar. Sardar approved of Munshi's ideas and they were duly incorporated in the Trust Deed.

On February 15, 1949, the States Ministry issued a directive that it was no longer necessary for the Temple or any land in Prabhas Patan to vest in the Government of India. The Temple and the land which were then in the jurisdiction of the Saurashtra Government, Junagadh having merged in the meantime, and such property rights as were considered necessary for the proper fulfilment of the Trust, would later vest in the Trustees.

The draft Trust Deed was sent to Munshi for finalisation. Munshi found that the draft needed considerable revision. He enlarged the objects of the Trust as not merely to restore and reconstruct the Temple and the idol, but to improve the surroundings and set up such institutions as may restore the sanctity of Prabhas Patan and its surroundings. This was to include the construction of rest-houses for the pilgrims and setting up of educational institutions for Sanskrit. The Trust was also to attend to the restoration of places like Dehotsarga—the place where

Shri Krishna cast off His body. Munshi finalised the Trust Deed and it was accepted.

The Advisory Committee appointed by the Government of India consisted of C. M. Master, Architect; J. C. Ghosh; Prabhashankar O. Sompura, one of the hereditary architects of Somanatha; U. J. Bhatt, Chief Engineer of Saurashtra Government; B. S. Vyas; G. B. Deolalikar, Consulting Architect of the Central P.W.D.; S. K. Joglekar, Town Planning Officer of the C.P.W.D.; with Munshi as Chairman and N. P. Chakravarti, then Director-general of Archaeology, as Convener. The Committee started working on July 30, 1949. Under the Committee's instructions, Prabhashankar Sompura, with his wide knowledge of the ancient art of temple building, prepared a plan of the new Temple on the style of the old one.

On October 18, 1949, Sardar nominated the first Trustees. The Jam Sahib of Nawanagar and Samaldas Gandhi were to represent Saurashtra Government Gadgil, Minister for Works, Mines and Power, and D. V. Rege, Regional Commissioner of Saurashtra at Rajkot, were selected as nominees of the Government of India. Brijmohan Birla and Munshi were named as representatives of the general public. Two vacancies were kept for future donors.

Sardar's message to the Jam Sahib of Nawanagar, which was conveyed in a D.O. letter, dated November 22, 1949, from V. P. Menon, then Secretary, States Ministry, was as follows:

“Your Highness will recollect that you handed over to me a cheque for Rs. 1,00,000 (one lakh) some time ago which I returned to you. I am now writing to suggest that this amount may be paid as a donation to the Somanatha Fund. Somanatha is an ancient heritage of ours, and we have to take every care to see that the temple and its environments are maintained in a manner worthy of their ancient traditions. For this purpose, we propose to constitute a Trust. Your Highness will remember that Sardar made an appeal for funds for the Somanatha Trust some time ago. The object, therefore, is one which deserves full support from all patriotic Indians and that is why I

am making this suggestion. I shall be grateful for a line in reply."

By the end of 1949, about Rs. 25 lakhs were collected. The Trust Deed was finally approved by the Government of India and Saurashtra Government and was executed on March 15, 1950. The objects of the Trust were thus fully defined:

"(a) to restore and reconstruct the said Temple of Somanatha in such manner as may be determined in consultation with an 'Advisory Committee' to be constituted as hereinafter provided and to incur the necessary expenses in connection therewith;

(b) to instal or cause to be installed in the Temple of Somanatha one or more idols of Shiva and other deities as are objects of worship by the Hindu community;

(c) to hold rituals, ceremonies and celebrations, necessary for or connected with or incidental to the shrine of the deity referred to in clauses (a) and (b);

(d) to allow all members of the Hindu community without distinction of caste, creed or sect to use the said Temple of Somanatha as a place of worship and for offering prayers and performing rites and ceremonies in accordance with the regulations that may be made in that behalf and for such other religious or charitable purposes as the Trustees may, from time to time, sanction but subject always to any provisions contained in such regulations as the Trustees may consider necessary to secure the safety and protection of the building;

(e) to construct and maintain rest-houses and dharmashalas for the pilgrims visiting the said Temple of Somanatha;

(f) to set up one or more institutions, including a University, which has for its objects the imparting of education, the essential features of which are:

- (i) the religious education of Hindus,
- (ii) the imparting of knowledge of Sanskrit,
- (iii) the study of or research in Sanskritic learning, Indology or any branch of knowledge of which such knowledge or Indology forms part, and
- (iv) the spread of Sanskrit or Sanskritic learning or to popularise Hindu scriptures or to get prepar-

ed or publish works which have for their object the spread of Sanskrit, Sanskritic learning or Indology or which would impart such education to the general public;

(g) to renovate, reconstruct and maintain Dehotsarga, the sacred place where Lord Sri Krishna departed from the world and to construct a shrine and a suitable memorial thereon;

(h) to allow non-Hindu visitors to visit the Somanatha Temple and have darshana of the deities in accordance with the rules and regulations that may, from time to time, be framed by the Trustees provided that no such visitor shall be allowed personally to perform worship in the said Temple of Somanatha;

(i) to improve, beautify, and maintain the land, premises and area leading to or in the neighbourhood of the said Temple of Somanatha and to do such things as may add beauty, solemnity and sanctity to the aforesaid Trust properties;

(j) to take over, maintain and conduct the temples, shrines and sacred places situated on the Somanatha Estate or any other place;

(k) to manage and develop the Somanatha Estate or any part thereof in such manner as the Trustees may deem fit including setting up buildings or agricultural farms or other schemes not repugnant to the principal objects contained in clauses (a) to (h) hereof;

(l) to maintain and develop goshalas for developing good breed of cows and other cattle and a farm or farms for the same;

(m) to take over, maintain, conduct and manage, other public Trusts of a religious or charitable nature which have as their objects the maintenance, upkeep or conduct of any Hindu temple, shrine or sacred place, of the setting up, maintenance or conduct of any institution, one of the features of which is the object specified in clauses (f) and (k) hereof;

(n) to do all things necessary, germane or incidental to the aforesaid objects."

Before the temple could be rebuilt, Sardar Patel passed away on the 15th December 1950. So long as the Iron

Man with the bronze complexion was alive, nobody dared to whisper a word against the reconstruction of Somanatha, which was rightly considered as an act of historic justice. But with his death, a whispering campaign was set afoot that the whole project was no more than an exhibition of Hindu revivalism.

A canard was set afloat that the Saurashtra Government intended to spend a huge amount of money on the reconstruction and though it was denied by the Chief Minister of the State, it was played up in certain sections of the press. The association of the Jam Sahib of Nawalnagar as the President of the Somanatha Committee gave rise to much criticism.

It was at this time that the Jam Sahib wrote a letter to Indian diplomats to send a pinch of soil, a few drops of water and twigs as were required for the prescribed ritual for installing a *Jyotirlinga*, from the respective countries to which they were accredited, so that the reinstallation might symbolise the unity of the world and the brotherhood of men. At least one of the diplomats felt that his secularism was in danger of being misunderstood and complained about it to the Prime Minister.

Munshi was rightly regarded as the linchpin of the reconstruction of Somanatha, and the Prime Minister talked to him and even wrote to him about the new twist that was being given to the restoration of Somanatha. The subject was raised even at meetings of the Cabinet. On the 24th April 1951, Munshi wrote a letter to Jawaharlal Nehru, giving the various stages of the association of the administration of Junagadh, the Saurashtra Government and the Government of India with the reconstruction of Somanatha. The letter is a historic document and no apologies are needed for quoting material parts from it:

“After the Indian Army was invited into Junagadh by the Dewan of the ex-Nawab, Sardar, Jam Sahib and Gadgil went to Junagadh. Next day, on November 13, 1947, they went to Prabhas to see the ruins of the Somanatha Temple. There they decided upon the reconstruction of the Somanatha Temple. It was publicly announced by the Sardar ‘that the Government of India had decided to rebuild the temple and instal the shrine.’ Jam Sahib and the

Junagadh Administration both gave a donation each on the spot. Junagadh Administration agreed to develop the town of Prabhas and to place at the disposal of the Somnatha temple about 5,000 acres of land for its development.

“The States Ministry of the Government of India thereafter took steps to implement this decision.

“On December 13, 1947, the Standing Committee of the W.M.P. Ministry accepted Gadgil’s proposal that the Government of India should reconstruct the temple in the original form and develop roughly one square mile of the surrounding area. I understand that this decision was included in the Weekly Note to the Cabinet. As I learn from Gadgil, it was also mentioned to the Cabinet. At the time, the policy of the Government was that the W.M.P. Ministry should reconstruct the old shrines and they were so doing in the case of certain Muslim shrines and mosques.

“The Government of India thereafter deputed Government architects to visit Prabhas and prepared a report for the reconstruction of the temple.

“When the whole scheme was discussed by Sardar with Bapu, he stated that it was all right except that the funds necessary for reconstructing the temple should come from the public. Gadgil also saw Bapu and Bapu gave him the same advice. Thereafter, the idea that the Government of India should finance the reconstruction of the temple was given up.

“On December 25, 1947, the States Ministry requested the Junagadh authorities to lease out a sufficiently large area surrounding the temple for development on the lines decided upon. The lines included the development of the town of Prabhas, which had fallen into neglect, into an attractive sea-side resort; the leasing out to the temple the areas necessary for developing it; the raising of the monument at Dehotsarga - the place where Sri Krishna had left His body; setting up a seat of learning which may develop into a University and a model agricultural and cattle farm on the lines of our Institute of Agriculture, Anand.

“The Junagadh authorities thereafter took steps to earmark the area that was to be given for the temple. The matters were discussed at considerable length between the

Administration of Junagadh and myself who was asked by Sardar to look into the matter. Ultimately, Sardar approved of the area that was to be given to the temple.

“On January 23, 1949, a Conference was held at Jamnagar attended by Sardar, Jam Sahib, Gadgil, Dhebar, the Chief Minister of Saurashtra, Samaldas Gandhi, Administrator of Junagadh, and the Regional Commissioner. The States Ministry by then had decided to transfer the temple properties to a Somanatha Trust to be created for the purpose. At that conference the scheme was finalised. It was decided that the Trust should be executed by the Saurashtra Government; and that the Government of India and the Saurashtra Government should each have two representatives on the Board of Trustees.

“I was thereafter asked by the States Ministry to prepare a Trust Deed for the purpose, which I did.

“Junagadh thereafter merged with Saurashtra to form the Saurashtra Union and the Union took over the undertaking of the Junagadh administration with regard to the Temple with the approval of the States Ministry. The Union thereafter took steps to carry out the said undertaking.

“As a result of the consultations between the States and the W.M.P. Ministries, the Government of India set up an Advisory Committee for implementing the decisions as regards Somanatha. Several Government servants, including Dr. J. C. Ghosh, Chemist, and the Town Planning Expert of the Government of India were members of the Committee. The Director-General of Archaeology was appointed the Convener, and in view of my fairly intimate knowledge of ancient history of Gujarat, and particularly of Somanatha, I was appointed the Chairman of the Committee. As a Chairman, I took up the implementation of the scheme in closest co-operation with the States Ministry.

“Later, I was asked to prepare a scheme for the University of Sanskrit to be located at Prabhas, and the same was accepted by the States Ministry as one of the objects of the Trust.

“On October 18, 1949, Sardar approved of this Trust. Government of India appointed Gadgil and Rege, Regional

Commissioner of Saurashtra, as their representatives on the Board of Trustees; it also nominated Shri B. M. Birla and myself as public men; Saurashtra Government nominated Jam Sahab and Samaldas Gandhi as their nominees. In inviting Gadgil to be a Trustee it was specifically mentioned that in view of the fact that he was the head of the Ministry of W.M.P., it was appropriate that he should be one of the Trustees.

“On 22nd November 1949, the States Ministry wrote to Jam Sahab as follows:—

‘Somanatha is an ancient heritage of ours, and we have to take every care to see that the temple and its environments are maintained in a manner worthy of their ancient traditions. For this purpose we propose to constitute a Trust. Your Highness will remember that Sardar made an appeal for funds for the Somanatha Trust some time ago. The object, therefore, is one which deserves full support from all patriotic Indians and that is why I am making this suggestion.’

“Some time before the Constitution came into force, Saurashtra Government executed the Trust, and it has been since carrying out the undertaking accepted by it when the merger of Junagadh was effected.

“The objects of the Trust Deed make it clear that the temple is not only to be open to all classes of Hindu community, but, according to the tradition of the old temple of Somanatha, also to non-Hindu visitors; that the area should be developed as a model town; that educational institutions including a University and agricultural farm should be established. The intention to throw open the temple to Harijans has evoked some criticism from the orthodox section of the community.

“Funds collected for the temple and other properties were transferred to the Trustees who have since been in possession of them.

“Sardar himself was to have not only attended the inaugural ceremony, but actually to perform the ceremony. Unfortunately, the temple could not be completed, and he died in the meantime. Apart from any other sentiment, we all feel that we should help in the redemption of Sardar's pledge to the best of our ability.

“In one of your earlier letters, you had written to me about the expenses of the temple. In fact, at present, we are only building a small part of the temple, and the cost of it is not going to be more than Rs. 3 lakhs. For the celebrations we are cutting out all rationed foodgrains. For the sacrifices, throwing in of grains in the sacrificial fire have been eschewed.

“The Somanatha Trust Funds and public subscriptions are going to meet the expenses of the installation ceremony. Your attention seems to have been drawn to a press note that the Saurashtra Government is spending Rs. 5 lakhs for the ceremony but not to the contradiction issued by it. It is spending money only for repairing and lighting roads of Prabhas, and for providing medical aid and water for the pilgrims. These expenses are borne by all governments within whose territory a large concourse gathers. This has been done even in the case of Congress gatherings, and certainly when huge Melas gather at Hardwar, Prayag, Rameshwar, Nasik and Ajmer.

“As you will see, the Government of India not only took the initial decision to reconstruct the temple, but formulated and set going the scheme, and created the agency for its further implementation. This will clearly indicate to you the extent of the Government of India's association with the scheme.

“You pointedly referred to me in the Cabinet as connected with Somanatha. I am glad you did so: for I do not want to keep back any part of my views or activities, particularly from you who have placed such abundant confidence in me all these months. I have helped in building up several institutions, for instance, the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Public School at Andheri, the Chembur Home for Destitute Children and the Institute of Agriculture at Anand. If similarly, I am now helping to build up Somanatha as a centre of religion and culture, a University and a farm, it is only as a humble task to which I have been called. The fact that when so helping, I have been a lawyer or a public man or a Minister is only an accident. You know well that my historical novels have brought the ancient history of Gujarat vividly before modern India, and my novel *Jaya Somanatha* has had a great appeal in the

country. I can assure you that the 'Collective Sub-conscious' of India today is happier with the scheme of reconstruction of Somanatha sponsored by the Government of India than with many other things that we have done and are doing.

"Yesterday you referred to 'Hindu Revivalism'. I knew your views on the subject; I have always done justice to them; I hope you will equally do justice to mine. Many have been the customs which I have defied in personal life from my boyhood. I have laboured in my humble way through literary and social work to shape or reintegrate some aspects of Hinduism, in the conviction that that alone will make India an advanced and vigorous nation under modern conditions.

"With regard to Jam Sahab's letter, a pinch of soil, a few drops of water and twigs from all over the world are ceremonial requirements for the installation. They are symbolical of the unity of the world and brotherhood of men. We never thought that a request to our Foreign Diplomats would perturb you so much. Some months back, the External Affairs Ministry was apprised by Jam Sahab of the letter he sent out. Replies were also sent by him to the E. A. Ministry. Newspapers, for the last some weeks, have been referring to these arrivals. Whenever a foreign representative has found it difficult or unwise to send things, he has said so. Mr. Panikkar evidently made some complaints to you; he also wrote to Jam Sahab that he would send some of these things; perhaps, if he had only written a personal letter to Jam Sahab confessing his inability, nobody would have pressed him to do anything.

"We are having a Sanskrit Conference there. I had discussions about it with foreign scholars last year. Though in my view, visit of persons interested in the cultural heritage of India from all parts of the world would be of great international value to India, out of deference to your wishes, I did not invite foreign scholars, some of whom, I am sure would have come. You wrote to me that you had no objection to my inviting the foreigners, but in view of this Panikkar affair, I did not want to annoy you further by asking whether I should withhold invitations from our Foreign Diplomats. Inviting, as I do, several of them often

and at the same time withholding an invitation from them on this occasion would certainly create an impression that in matters of religious ceremony, we are so exclusive as not even to invite them. No one, I am sure, will come even if invited. We cannot shut out the Foreign Correspondents if they come. I should like to seek your guidance in this matter.

“One word more. It is my faith in our past which has given me the strength to work in the present and to look forward to our future. I cannot value freedom if it deprives us of the *Bhagavad Gita* or uproots our millions from the faith with which they look upon our temples and thereby destroys the texture of our lives. I have been given the privilege of seeing my incessant dream of Somanatha reconstruction come true. That makes me feel—makes me almost sure—that this shrine once restored to a place of importance in our life will give to our people purer conception of religion and a more vivid consciousness of our strength, so vital in these days of freedom and its trials.”

It may be mentioned here that when the letter of Munshi was seen by V. P. Menon, who was then Adviser to the States Ministry, he wrote the following letter to Munshi:—

“I have seen your master-piece. I for one would be prepared to live and, if necessary, die by the views you have expressed in your letter.”

It must be said to the credit of the Prime Minister that, after receiving Munshi's forthright letter, he came to assess the carping critics of the Somanatha restoration at their true worth. The fact that the President of the Republic, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, was to reinstall the new deity must have influenced the Prime Minister to no small extent.

The installation ceremony of the *linga* was fixed for the 11th May 1951. At this time Munshi was the Union Minister for Food and Agriculture, and he had to make a dash to Burma in order to negotiate a rice deal. It was at this time he wrote in great hurry the book *Somanatha—The Shrine Eternal*. It is a compendium of information about the temple which has been the eternal symbol of Hindu faith and the destruction of which by Mohamed

Ghazni had been burned into the collective sub-conscious of the race, as an unforgettable national disaster.

The installation of the new deity by Dr. Rajendra Prasad took place in the presence of a huge concourse of people, who had come from every part of India, and nobody would have been happier on that occasion than Munshi, who saw his incessant dream of Somanatha reconstruction come true on that day.